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GREYSLAER:

A ROMANCE OF THE MOHAWK.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

“A WINTER IN THE WEST,” AND “WILD SCENES
IN THE FOREST AND PRAIRIE.”

“There is a divinity which shapes our ends,
Rough hew them how we will.”

SHAKSPEARE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

NEW-YORK:

HARPER & BROTHERS, 82 CLIFF-STREET.

1840.

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By CHARLES FENNO HOFFMAN,
In the Clerk's Office of the Southern District of New York.

BOOK SECOND.

DAYS OF DARKNESS.

"Soldier. My lord, a cloud of dust and men
The sentinels from the east gate discover ;
And, as they guess, the storm bends this way.

Brennoralt. Let it be.

Sol. My lord ?

Bren. Let it be ;

I will not fight to-day."

SUCKLING.

"My cell 'tis, lady ; where, instead of masks,
Music, tilts, tourneys, and such court-like shows,
The hollow murmur of the checkless winds
Shall groan again, while the unquiet sea
Shakes the whole rock with foamy battery.
There usherless the air comes in and out ;
The rheumy vault will force your eyes to weep,
While you behold true desolation."

MARSTON.

"Edward. Who's there ? what light is that ? wherefore com'st
thou ?

Lightborn. To comfort you, and bring joyful news."

MARLOWE.

NOT BEING

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and the other side of the paper
is covered with a thin layer of
oil of the same kind as the one
on the other side.

It is made by

mixing the

oil with the

other ingredients.

It is

used for the purpose of
making the paper more
durable and of
preventing it from
being damaged by
the action of the
oil of the same kind
as the one on the
other side.

It is

made by mixing the

oil with the other

ingredients.

GREYSLAER;

A ROMANCE OF THE MOHAWK.

BOOK SECOND.

CONTINUED.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE WANDERERS.

“When those we love are absent—far away,
When those we love have met some hapless fate,
How pours the heart its lone and plaintive lay,
As the wood-songster mourns her stolen mate!
Alas! the summer bower—how desolate!
The winter hearth—how dim its fire appears!
While the pale memories of by-gone years
Around our thoughts like spectral shadows wait.”

PARK BENJAMIN.

“She led him through the trackless wild
Where noontide sunbeam never blazed.”—SPRAGUE.

THE glad spring has come again over the land, and nowhere do the flowers spring more joyfully beneath her flushing footsteps than in the lovely valley of the Mohawk. Here the seeds of civil discord lie crushed, or, at least, inert, at present. The storm of war has rolled off to distant borders; or if, indeed, it be lowering near again, its terrors are unfelt, because unseen. The husbandman has once more driven his team afield, free from the apprehension that he may return to find a blazing roof-

tree and slaughtered household when the close of day shall relieve him from his toils. The wife once more has joyed to see him go forth whistling on his way, confident that the protector of her children will not fall slaughtered in the ploughshare's furrow, but return to glad her eyes at nightfall. Alas ! these simple people dream not that the present calm is but a breathing-spell in the terrible struggle which, ere it pass away, shall print every cliff of this beautiful region with a legend of horror, and story its romantic stream with deeds of fiendish crime.

Clad in the deepest mourning, the orphan heiress of the Hawksnest sits by the trellised window, gazing out upon the lovely fields, of which the supposed death of her lover and relative has made her the possessor. Her wild brother, surrendering his share in the estate to her, has gone to seek a soldier's fortune or a patriot's death by fighting in the armies of his country. The green mound that covers the remains of her last surviving parent and of her only sister is seen through a vista of trees upon a swell of land beyond. It is the mellow hour of twilight, when the thoughtful heart loves best to ponder upon such mementoes of the departed. And has Alida, when her eye o'erbrims, and her hands are clasped in agitation at the thought of the cruel fate which has overtaken her household—has she no thought, no one woman's regretful tear, for the lover who had dared everything to shield those who were dear to her from harm ; the lover who had thrown away his own life in the effort to snatch her from a captivity worse than death ?

She *had* thought of him. She now thought of him. She had too often and too long thought of him. At least, sometimes she herself so believed, when accusing herself of dwelling more upon his memory than upon that of those who ought to be

dearer to her. But, then, was there no excuse for that which her woman's heart straightway supplied? For her sister and father it was pleasurable, but vain, to grieve. It was challenging the will of Heaven ever to dwell gloomily upon their fate, which Heaven, for good or ill, had fixed for ever. But of Greyslaer she could think hopefully, as of one who might still return to share her friendship and receive her gratitude. "*Her friendship!*" Yes, that was the word, if her thoughts had been syllabled to utterance when she hoped for Greyslaer's return. But there were moments when she hoped not thus; moments of dark conviction that he had ceased to be upon this earth; that death had overtaken him as well as others for whom she was better schooled to grieve.

That black death is a strange touchstone of the human heart. How instantly it brings our real feelings to the surface! How it reawakens and calls out our stiffly accorded esteem! How it quickens into impetuous life our reluctant tenderness, that has been withheld from its object till it can avail no more!

Strange inconsistency of woman's nature! Alida mourned the dead Greyslaer as if he had been her affianced lover; but hoped for the reappearance of the living one as of a man who could never be more to her than a cherished friend—a brother—a *younger* brother!

Alack! young Max, couldst thou but now steal beside that twilight window, hear those murmured words of sorrow, and take that taper hand which is busied in brushing away those fast-dropping tears, thy presence at such a melting moment might bring a deeper solace, call out a softer feeling than simple joy at recovery of a long-lost friend. Alack! that

moments so propitious to a lover should pass away for naught !

And where, then, is Greyslaer ? The autumn was not spent idly by his friends in exploring the wilderness for traces of his fate ; and even in mid-winter Balt has crossed the Garoga lakes on snow-shoes, followed up the cascades of Konnedieyu, and penetrated deep into the Sacondaga country upon the same errand. The spot where Brant once held his secret camp, and to which his captives were carried, has been twice examined since Alida lent her aid to direct Balt to the spot. But the wigwams were long since deserted, and the snow, which beat down and broke their flimsy frames, obliterated every track by which the migrating Indians could be followed. Balt again took up the search the moment the severity of winter became relaxed. He has now followed the spring in her graceful mission northward ; and the lakes of the Upper Hudson, the wild recesses of the Adirondack Mountains, that mysterious wilderness which no white man has yet explored, is said to be the scene of his faithful wanderings. Thither we will soon follow him. But first, however, we must go back some months, and take up the thread of our narrative at the squaw camp of Thayendaneagea, if we would follow out the fortunes of Greyslaer from the moment when the desperado Valtmeyer so fearfully crossed his path.

The first red streaks of dawn were beginning to dapple the east, when the luckless captive found himself traversing a deep hemlock forest, with "The Spreading Dew" for his guide. The Indian girl, after reviving him from the stunning effects of the blow which had prostrated him, by sprinkling water upon his forehead, had bound up the contusion with a fillet of colewort leaves, which was kept in its place

by a strip of strouding torn from her own dress ; and, urging her still bewildered patient from the scene of his mishap, had thriddled the swamp and guided him to the hills in the rear of the Indian camp. These hills stretch away toward the north, increasing continually in altitude as they recede from the Mohawk, until they finally swell into those stupendous highlands known as the Adirondack Mountains.

Greyslaer, though ignorant of the precise geography of this Alpine region, had still some idea of the vast wilderness which extended toward the Canada border ; and when he saw his guide, after reaching a rapid and turbulent stream, turn her face to the northward, and strike up along its banks, as if about to follow up the water to the mountain lake in which it probably headed, he paused, and was compelled, for the first time, to reflect upon what use he should make of his newly-recovered liberty, and which way it were best for him now to direct his steps. His first object must be, of course, to reach the nearest body of his friends. But, since the events in which he had been an actor, and those which might have transpired during the weeks that he was ill and a prisoner, he knew not where those friends might be found. He was ignorant what changes might have taken place in the valley of the Mohawk, or which party might have the ascendancy now that the spirit of civil discord was fairly let loose in that once tranquil region. Should he fall into the hands of some straggling band of Tories, or should he even venture to claim the hospitality of those who, but a month since, had stood neutral while the conflict was impending, he might find himself seized upon by some new convert to the royal party, who would gladly afford the most lively proofs of his newborn zeal for the crown by securing so active a partisan

of the patriot cause. The city of Albany was, therefore, his only safe destination, if he would preserve that liberty of action, by the preservation of which alone he could hope to succour Alida.

He determined, therefore, not to venture descending into the lower country till he could strike it at least as far east as Schenectady. But how, if he concluded to make this long circuit through the woods, could he find his way amid the wild forests he must traverse ? Was this lonely Indian girl, who was little more than a child, to be his only guide ? and, if so, how were they to procure subsistence in a journey through the wilderness, where the path was so toilsome that many days must elapse before he could accomplish the distance which, upon an ordinary road, can be traversed in one ? Greyslaer abruptly broke off these unsatisfactory reflections by asking his companion whither she was now guiding him. The reply of "The Dew" told him that much might be gained by admitting her into his counsels. The foresight of the Indian maid had anticipated at least the most serious of the difficulties which embarrassed her companion. She was leading him to the Garoga lakes, where her tribesmen had once had a fishing camp, in which they might at least find a shelter from the elements, and where Greyslaer could readily obtain subsistence for himself until "The Dew" could make her way to the settlements and gain some tidings of his friends, or, at least, procure him some more eligible guide than herself from the lower castle of the Mohawks ; a small band of that tribe, under their leader Hendrick, being friendly to the patriot cause. Greyslaer hoped, however, that if he could once secure a retreat, where, for a few days, he should be safe from pursuit, he might find means to communicate with his faithful and cherished follower, old Balt,

if, indeed, the stout old forester had not perished in the fray in which he himself was taken prisoner.

These anxious reflections upon the chances of the future served for a while to turn his thoughts from a more bitter channel. But the recollection of the scene in which Alida had been torn from his side now recurred with all its horrors.

It is a hard thing to love vainly. It is a hard thing for the young heart, that has given its first generous burst of affection to another, to be flung back upon itself, shocked, borne down, blasted upon the very threshold of existence. The growth of the sentiment in some minds—in those which love most deeply—is often the first emotion that has ever compelled them to look into their own souls; that has ever made them fully aware of the sentient and spiritual essence which they bear within this earthly tabernacle. And to surrender that sentiment, seems like parting with the vital spirit that animates them. Such surrenderment of their early dreams is, however, the fate of thousands; for love—young love—like the Bird of Lightning in the Iroquois fable, which bears the flame from Heaven to teach men only where first the purifying element had birth, seems, like the lightning, to fulfil his mission, reckless where'er his burning wings may sweep, so that his mysterious errand be accomplished.

But Greyslaer's was no common tale of misplaced hopes and unrequited attachment. *He* could not fling from him the image of Alida as an idle vision of his dreaming boyhood. Her sorrows had become his own; and the love which might have perished from hopelessness seemed born anew from sympathy; ay, though he were doomed hereafter to have neither part nor lot in aught else belonging to her, save this share in her sorrows only, yet such community of grief was so dear to him, that the

world had now no prize for which Greyslaer would have bartered his gloomy heritage of wo. Alas ! what a joyless and barren destiny did he thus embrace ! Flinging his fresh and blossoming youth, like a worthless weed, away ; grafting upon his ripening manhood a shoot of bitterness, that must dwarf its energies and wither its fruit of promise.

The shrill burst of the Indian warwhoop startled Greyslaer from the stern revery with which we have ventured to blind our own reflections while detailing its general character. The wild cry seemed to come from beneath his very feet. He recoiled a step, and gazed eagerly down the rocky defile he was descending. The sumach and sassafras grew thick and heavy, imbowering the broken path below. The Indian girl was nowhere to be seen. He turned and threw a hurried glance along the sides of the glen, where ledges of rock here and there cut the foliage horizontally before him. He caught a glimpse, as of the figure of the light-footed maiden scaling the walls of the glen, and retreating from him. He advanced a pace to see if it were indeed her who was thus flying from him at his utmost need. On the instant, a tomahawk, hurtled through the air and cleaving the light branches near, buried itself in a maple-tree beside him. Quick as light, Greyslaer seized the weapon and plucked it from the bark in which it quivered. But, instantaneous as was the movement, it did not avail him ; for, as he was in the act of wheeling round to confront the peril in the direction whence the hatchet came, he was grappled in the arms of a sinewy Indian. Down they both went together, the Indian uppermost ; and so completely did he seem to have Greyslaer at advantage, that he leisurely addressed him while partly raising himself to draw his knife.

“ My broder thought it time to leave the camp

when Isaac come, eh, my broder? Aha!" And, as the miscreant spoke, he made a motion across the scull of his prostrate prisoner, as if he felt tempted to go through the ceremony of scalping while life, yet vigorous in his veins, should give a zest to the cruelty.

But Greyslaer was not the man to be sportively handled in a death encounter. His dark eye followed the gleaming weapon, as the barbarian flourished it above his head, with a glance as keen as that of the hawk-eyed Indian. He had fallen with one arm under him, and, happily, it was that which held the tomahawk, which thus escaped the notice of his foe. It was for the moment pinioned to the ground, not less by the weight of his own body than by that of the savage; and the force with which he had been hurled to the earth so paralyzed the strength of Greyslaer, that he did not at first attempt to extricate his hand. But now, throwing back his head, as if he shrunk from the knife that was offered at it, he suddenly arched his back so as to lift the savage and himself together; and, slipping his arm from under him as the other bore him down again by throwing the full weight of his person lengthwise upon him, he dealt a side blow with the hatchet which nearly crushed the scull of the Indian. The fellow relaxed his grip of Greyslaer's throat in an instant, and rolled over, and lay as if stricken to death upon the spot, while, breathless and disordered, young Max regained his feet.

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CHAPTER IX.

THE MARCH OF THE CAPTIVE.

“ Amid thy forest solitudes, he climbs
O'er crags that proudly tower above the deep,
And knows that sense of danger—which sublimed
The breathless moment—when his daring step
Is on the verge of the cliff, and he can hear
The low dash of the wave with startled ear,
Like the death-music of his coming doom,
And clings to the green turf with desperate force,
As the heart clings to life ; and when resume
The currents in his veins their wonted course,
There lingers a deep feeling, like the moan
Of wearied ocean when the storm is gone.”—HALLECK.

UPON examining the features of the Indian, which were of a singularly brutal cast, Greyslaer felt convinced that he had beheld them before, but where or when it was impossible for him to say.

Bending near to scrutinize them more closely, he observed that life still remained ; for the eyes, which were shut, had their lids, not smoothly drooping as when closed in death, but knit and screwed together as when suddenly closed in a paroxysm of rage or pain. They opened now, as a heavy gasp broke from the bosom of the savage. Max instantly possessed himself of the scalping-knife which lay near, and held it, like a dagger of *misericorde*, at the throat of his reviving foe. The slightest thrust would have rid him at once of all farther difficulty ; but it was not in his heart to slaughter a living man thus laid at his mercy, and he shouted to the girl to bring him a withe that he might bind his prisoner. The Dew replied not to his call. But he heard

a quick trampling near, which he mistook for her approach.

He looked in the direction whence the sound of footsteps came, but the leafy covert was so thick in that direction that he could descry nothing. He listened anxiously; they came nearer, but there was no reply to his repeated calls. The footsteps paused a moment. He leaned forward to peer beneath the heavy branches; and in the same moment that an armed Indian darted from the covert before him, the shadow of another, who was approaching from behind, was cast athwart him. He had not time to spring to his feet before he was again a captive and defenceless.

The two last-comers were soon joined by others, who quickly made a rude litter of boughs for their wounded tribesman, and the whole party then took their way through the woods with their captive. They did not, however, carry their prisoner back to the squaw camp, as he first expected they would, when, under the circumstances, he anticipated the usual wretched doom of an Indian prisoner. But, moving along leisurely until they came to a level and marshy piece of ground, they paused for a moment, and seemed in doubt what next to do, when one, who had aided in carrying the wounded man, gave his place to another, and approached to him who seemed to act as leader of the party. He murmured something, which, from the low tones in which the Indians usually pitch their voices, Greyslaer could not overhear.

"Wahss!" (go!) was the brief reply to his communication.

The man beckoned to two others, and the three, plunging into a copse near by, appeared the next moment, each with a birchen canoe upon his shoulders. Crossing the trail they had been travelling,

the whole party entered a thicket of alders, where a thread of water, scarce three inches deep, crept noiselessly along. The others carefully parted the bushes, so that the canoemen could let down their shallops into this slender rill, which was so narrow that the water was wholly hidden when a canoe was placed upon its surface.

The wounded man was assigned to the forward canoe, and Greyslaer, with his arms still pinioned behind him, placed in the centre. The whole party were then again soon in motion. The runnel was too narrow for the use of the paddles, and for some time they propelled themselves forward merely by the aid of the bushes which overreached their heads.

At last they came to a spot where the swamp around them, being confined between two hills, poured its oozing springs more completely into a single current. The water, running deeper and swifter, cuts its way down through the black mould until a channel of yellow pebbles is revealed beneath it. The alders are separated more widely from each other, and grow more in scattered clumps, which sometimes form green islets, circled with a fringe of scarlet, wherever their red roots are washed and polished by the flowing waters.

Now the stream will sweep amid tussocks of long waving grass, crowned here and there by a broad branching elm, whose branches dip in the tide, that whirls in deepening eddies where its projecting roots overhang the water. Now it ripples for a few yards over a pebbly bottom, and then, turned by a spit of yellow sand—thick trodden with the tracks of deer, of wolves, and not unfrequently with those of bears and panthers—it slides round a point of land black with the shade of lofty pines. A frith of long wild grass, growing evenly as a fresh-mowed meadow, and embayed among the thousand points

of a tamarack swamp, receives now the spreading river. And now, again, it is circumscribed once more into a deep, black, formal-looking pool, circled with water lilies; and henceforth, around many a beetling crag, thick sheathed with laurel and the clustering hemlock, and beneath the shadows of many a tall mountain rising from forests of bass-wood and maple, it marches proudly onward till it expands into a magnificent lake.

Coasting along the shores of this lake for a mile or two, they came to an Indian hunter's camp, which, as it seemed, belonged to the man who furnished the canoes. The place was offensive from the smell of dead animals, such as minks, otters, and musquashes, whose carcasses, stripped of their skins, were suspended from the boughs of trees around the cabin as food for the Indian dogs. But the Indians, notwithstanding their proverbial keenness of scent, seemed nowise molested by this savoury atmosphere.*

* A sporting friend, the companion of the author in more than one excursion among these mountain wilds, seeing some Indians with whom he hunted busied in removing these objects of annoyance from the camp as the party approached it, was wholly at a loss to conceive the motive of placing them where they were found, until the sudden appearance of two half-famished dogs revealed the mystery; for it is the custom of a hunter, when leaving his dogs to protect his camp in his absence, to hang the food prepared for them at different heights, so that the animal might not devour all his stores at once, but have to leap higher for it as he grows leaner.

These dogs, as one might have supposed from their fatigued appearance, had been off somewhere pursuing the chase for their own amusement. But, upon this being suggested to the old Indian hunter, who spoke a few words of broken English, and was more communicative than most of his race, he was indignant at the idea of an Indian dog deserting his charge. He pointed to a mountain peak at the other end of the lake, and assured our friend that they had been watching for him from its summit, when they saw his boat upon the water and hurried homeward.

Leaving their wounded tribesman under the care of this worthy, who laid claim to some skill as a medicine-man, the rest of the party started again with their captive on the following day, and, crossing several mountain ridges, and winding their way among innumerable ponds and lakes, halted near a beautiful sheet of water, which still bears the name of Indian Lake, from its having been a sacred place of resort to the Iroquois.

The outlet of this lake, though it is buried in a region of lofty and steril mountains, winds through broad savannas of deep grass, imbowered with enormous elms, forming a soft and open sylvan landscape, which is in the most delicious contrast to the thick and rugged forests which frown from the adjacent hills. This was the seat of the mysterious KENTICOYS, or solemn meetings of the Mohawks, when, at the opening and closing year, the different tribes of the Iroquois retired, each to some such forest-temple, to worship the Supreme Being, whose power was alike acknowledged by all.

The prisoner, though treated at this sacred season with a degree of mildness and forbearance that was new to him as a trait of Indian character, was only allowed to approach the threshold of the valley, where a guardian was appointed him until the solemn days were over.

The garden-like plain was spread out below the eminence upon which stood the shanty which was his temporary prison-house; and Greyslaer could from time to time discern some plumed band defiling from the hills and losing themselves among the far-reaching groves, to which the Indians repaired from every side. But of the form of their ceremonial or the nature of their worship he could discern nothing. Nor has any white man been able to learn

more of these periodical gatherings of the Iroquois, save only their name and their object.*

It was two days after these unknown rites were consummated that Greyslaer found himself ascending a lofty mountain under the care of his captors, who still withheld all harsh treatment, while warily watching him as if they only held him in trust as the captive of some one more powerful than themselves. It could scarcely be the wounded Isaac, however; for, since his first seizure, Greyslaer had been studiously kept out of the sight of that ferocious Indian, whose bloody-minded disposition frequently showed itself during the delirium of fever under which he was left at the hunter's cabin.

Whatever disposition it was ultimately intended to make of the prisoner, his life seemed in little danger during the march; but a measure adopted by his captors as he now reaches the highest pinnacle of the mountain seems to indicate that its crisis is at hand. They have led him to the edge of a lofty precipice, which commands a view almost completely around the compass, and motion to him to cast his eyes above and below him.

It is the hour of autumn sunset, when the golden air seems to glorify every object on which it rests. Never did it bathe in molten light a lovelier landscape of mountain peaks, interminable to the eye; interlaced by lakes so numerous that, as these last reflect the tints of the glowing sky,

* It is curious to remark, however, how, with the spread of Christianity and civilization along our Indian borders, this custom of retiring away from the haunts of men to worship God among primeval woods, grew up among our frontiersmen; while some might even discover an analogy between the rude but not irreligious feeling which first suggested the ancient *Kenticoy's* of the Iroquois, and the policy which still keeps alive the practice of "camp-meetings" among a numerous and not unenlightened sect of Christians.—See *Flint's Valley of the Mississippi*.

the mountains themselves seem, in their autumn livery, like rainbow masses floating in liquid ether. The heart of Greyslaer thrills within him at the sight ; and not the least painful part of the death that seems to hover near is the thought of closing his eyes for ever upon such a world of glorious beauty. But his struggles to prevent them from bandaging his eyes are vain, for his hands are bound behind him ; and now he stands blinded and helpless above the gulf into which each moment he expects to be hurled !

Suddenly he feels a rude hand upon either shoulder, and he gasps the prayer which he believes to be his last—but the next moment the two Indians who have fixed their gripe upon him only turn their captive round several times, fast held between them, and lead him away from the precipice. He is then conscious of gradually descending. Again he feels that his path leads upward over innumerable obstacles, which his guides patiently aid him in surmounting. Once more, again, he is convinced that he is descending, though his pathway winds so hither and thither that it is impossible to say how steep the slope may be.

At last he hears the sound of water faintly dashing upon the shore. His guides halt and remove the bandage from his eyes. He looks up, and finds himself upon the edge of a small lake or mountain tarn, deep set at the bottom of a rocky bowl or hollow less than a mile in diameter, circled around by naked crags and splintered pinnacles of rock, some straggling copsewood or a blasted tree here and there alone relieving the utter barrenness of the scene, which at once conveys the idea of the extinct crater of a volcano.

This heart-chilling sterility is, however, somewhat redeemed, when, after circling the lake for a

short distance, the Indians come to a few acres of well-wooded land in a recess of the circular valley. Here Greyslaer again hears the voices of women and children from a camp of safety, and resigns himself to the monotony of captivity in a stronghold from which there seems no escape.

It were bootless to relate the varied sufferings of Max Greyslaer during his long winter of captivity in that dreary mountain, which the Indians call "The Thunder's Nest :".* To tell how he passed weeks of nearly utter starvation, when fortune failed the two or three Indian hunters upon whose success the whole community depended for subsistence : How he eagerly caught at the relief to his monotonous existence, when his captors ordered him also to turn out and hunt the bear, the lynx, and the panther, the only animals which are found among those high mountain fastnesses in the winter season, while the Iroquois themselves pursued on snow-shoes the moose and red deer in the valleys below : To tell of the harsh treatment he received, when, weary and faint, with limbs half frozen and lacerated from toiling through the frozen snow-crust, he returned from a fruitless hunt ; of the capricious gleams of kindness of which he was the object when his address and prowess in the chase awakened alike the admiration and the jealousy of those who watched his every motion while pursuing it with him. But now the spring, which has been long in reaching this highland region, has, while thickening the forest around, brought with it the hope of escape ; amid some of those greenwood coverts. It is true that he is no longer permitted to wander as far as when the woods were bare. But if he can break his thralldom for an hour, there is one at hand with

* Crane Mountain is its present unmeaning name.

both the will and the ability to guide him from the wilderness.

There has been an accession of numbers to the Indian camp, bringing rumours that Brant and his warriors have all left the lower country. And The Spreading Dew, who came in with the rest, has even communicated to Greyslaer that Sir John Johnston and his loyalist retainers, both Indian and white, have withdrawn from the Valley of the Mohawk and fled to Canada. The patriots must be in the ascendency ! Why is Greyslaer not there to share the triumph of his friends ?

CHAPTER X.

THE FORESTERS.

"The woodland rings with laugh and shout,
As if a hunt were up,
And woodland flowers are gathered
To crown the soldier's cup.
With merry songs we mock the wind
That in the pine-top grieves,
And slumber long and sweetly
On beds of oaken leaves."—BRYANT.

THERE were preparations for a hunter's carousal in the heart of the forest. The scene of their revel was a sunny glade, where a dozen idlers were lounging away the noontide beneath the dappled boughs. A fire had been kindled upon a flat rock near by; and from the rivulet that gurgled around its base, the neck of a black bottle protruded, where it had been anchored to cool in the running water. A fresh-killed buck lay as if just thrown upon the sod in the midst of the woodland crew, who stirred themselves from the shade as the hunter who had flung the carcass from his strong shoulders turned to lean his rifle against the fretted trunk of a walnut-tree that spread its branches near.

"Why, Kit Lansingh, my boy, you are no slouch of a woodsman to carry a yearling of such a heft as that," cried our old friend Balt, lifting the deer by its antlers partly from the ground. "You must have struck the crittur, too, a smart distance from here, for none of us have heard the crack of your rifle to-day."

"Somebody may, though you have not, Uncle

Balt ; for, let me tell you, boys, there's other folks in the woods besides us chaps here."

The hunters started up and were now all attention—for the signs of strangers in the forest is ever a source of keen interest to the woodsman, who, when the frontier is in arms, never ventures to strike the game of which he is in search without remembering that he himself may be at that very moment the human quarry of some more dangerous hunter that hovers near.

"Nay, Conyer, go on cutting up the carcass. I've left no trail to guide a Redskin to this spot," said the hunter, disembarassing himself of his powder-horn and shooting-pouch, which he hung upon a wild plum-bush near by. "We can sit down to dinner without any of Brant's people coming to take pot-luck with us ; for I've scouted every rod of ground within miles of the camp. But the Redskins are out nevertheless, I tell ye."

"Where, Kit, where ? How know you ?" simultaneously cried a dozen voices.

"Why, you see, it must be at least four hours ago since I struck that yearling, which was down in the Whooping-Hollow by Cawaynoot Pond."

"Cawaynoot Pond !" ejaculated a hunter. "What, that little bog-bordered lake, with the island that floats loose upon it like a toast in a tankard ?"

"Go on, go on, Kit," cried another. "We all know the Whooping Hollow ; but you were a bold fellow to strike a deer there."

"Yes, I stirred him first in the mash at this eend of Cawaynoot, and that's a fact. But, instead of taking the water there, he puts out westward, and clips it right over toward the river till he brought me in sight of the Potash Kettle."

"Senongewah—'The Great Upturned Pot'—

the Abregynes call it," ejaculated Balt; "I know the mounting."

"Well," pursued Lansingh, "the buck doesn't keep on toward the river, but hooks it right round the rim of the Kettle, and back again toward the east. It was, in course, long afore I could git a shot; and, following hard on his trail along a hill-side overgrown with short sprangly bushes, I saw, by the way in which they were trampled down, that a white man must have passed that way before me."

"A white man?" cried several voices, with increasing interest.

"Yes, a white man; and that within no very great time, any how."

"How knew you that, Kit?" asked Balt.

"Why, I cleared the bushes aside, looked down, and there, as plain as my Bible, I saw the print of his shoe in the moss."

"Which, in course, would not hold a foot-print long if it was fresh and springy. Kit is right, boys," said Balt.

"And that wasn't all, uncle. I saw a shoe-print in the fresh moss, with that of a small Injun moccasin treading right in his footsteps. (A little salt, Teunis; now let the gravy of that other slice drip on my corn-cake till I'm ready for it—so fashion.)"

"A moccasin? Go on, go on, Kit," cried an eager young hunter.

"Let a man eat in whiles, won't you, lads?" said Lansingh, who seemed disposed to make the most of his narrative; "well, I went on, followed my deer till I got a shot at him from behind a cranberry bush in the Whooping Hollow, and just as he was bending his knees to take the water near the very spot where I first started him (it was natural, you know, Uncle Balt, for the crittur to go back where he belonged—a drop of that liquor, if you please), he

caught my bullet in the back of his neck, gave a splurge, and was done for.

"So, after pulling him out of the water, I hangs up the carcass out of reach of the wolves, and goes back to look after the white man's trail.

"It kept along the hillside only a short distance, and then struck suddenly off atween two rocks and among some dogbriers, where I nearly lost it, right over the ridge; on the opposite side of which it led right back in the direction from which I had first traced it. Now, says I to myself, says I, it's after all only some fool of a fellow that has lost himself in these woods, which are about the easiest to travel a human crittur could have, seeing that the hills are so many landmarks all around. Let him go to the old boy, says I, for a dunderhead as he is. No, again says I, here's an Injun moccasin right in his track, and perhaps it's some unfortunate who's been driven to take to the brush by the troubles of the times, and not come here to make a fool of himself for pastime; so, Kit Lansingh, streak it ahead, man, and look after your fellow-crittur."

"I'd a disowned ye for my sister's son had ye done otherwise," interrupted Balt.

"Well," pursued the hunter, "I did go ahead, and that though it took me myself out of my way, Uncle Balt. I followed the scent for miles toward the east, till I thought it would take me clean out to Lake George. But at last I saw what paid me for my trouble; for, in crossing a bit of pine barren, I came upon a raal Indian trail, and no mistake about it—where a dozen men or more had streaked it through the sand after my shoe and moccasin."

"Tormented lightning!" cried Balt, rubbing his hands in much excitement; "go on, go on, Kit; d'ye say a dozen Injuns?"

"Yes, uncle, not a Copperskin less; and let me

tell you now that this discovery discomboberated me considerably. Why, says I to myself, says I, why should a dozen Redskins be led away thus after one poor wanderer, when they might see already, from the double trail, that he is a doomed man, from the moccasin tread that is still fresh in his footfalls; here's something new, now, to study in Injun natur, and I'll see the eend of it. So, with that, I ups and ons.

"And now I soon saw, by the way in which the white man's track doubled and doubled again, crossing and recrossing that of the Injuns in one eternal everlasting snarl, that the fellow could not be cutting such carlicues for nothing. He knows what he's about. He's a chap that understands himself, says I; and I began to have a respect for him.

"By this time, though I ought to have said it afore, the trail had led west again; yes, indeed, clean across the river, which I forded in following it, and then up and away over the ridge on the opposite side, striking clean over the Sacondaga. I mistrusted that it would cross that river, too, as it had down the other branch; but no, it follows down to the meeting of the waters, or *Tiosaronda*,* as the Abregynes call it. There, where the falls of the main river roar through the rocky chasm as it hurries along like mad to join the other fork. And here, says I, the game will either be up with Shoeties, or he will give Moccasin the slip altogether. And raally, boys, I defy the best woodsman among ye—I defy the devil, or Uncle Balt himself—to find any leavings of that white man around the place. You may see there the woods trampled all round by Injuns. You may see where they have slipped down the bank, and where they've clomb up again. You may follow their trail backward and forward

* Now Luzerne.

along either fork of the stream for a mile, and you may see where they all united again, and trudged off as if to take up the back track once more afresh, and so make a new thing of it ; but how or whither that white man cleared himself, you cannot find out !”

“ That flogs natur !” cried a hunter. “ And saw ye no other trace of the critturs anywhere, Kit ? Not a hair’s ashes of them ?”

“ Yes ! but not thereabouts ; and now, boys, I’m about to tell you the curiosest part o’ the hull business. For you must know, that, if I had not left my deer where I did, the snarl might have remained without any farther clew. But as, after giving up the chase, I made back-tracks up the river, recrossed, and struck out again for Whooping Hollow to bring the venison on here to camp, what should I discover but the selfsame track of the white man right in the heart of the hollow. I did not look, to see whether the floating island was near shore, or if he had stepped aboard and floated off on it ; but, ‘ my friend,’ says I to him—I mean, says I to myself—‘ my friend,’ says I, ‘ had I seen your first track in the Whooping Hollow, and on the very shores of Cawaynoot, you would never have led me sich a Jack-a-lantern chase as this. I’m not a gentleman that keeps company with the Striped Huntsman or Red-heeled Rob, as the Scotch settlers call ye ; and, if we *are* ever to make acquaintance, your own parlour in the Whooping Hollow is not exactly the place I would choose for an introduction. With that I cut out in quick order from the hollow, and made clean tracks for camp. And that, boys, is the hull o’ my story ; and now let’s have something to drink.”

The woodsmen all listened with deep attention to this long rigmarole narrative as it was slowly de-

tailed by the young hunter. By some it was received merely as an idle tale of wonder, such as those who love the marvellous may often hear from the simple-minded rangers of our forest borders. It was but one of the thousand stories told about the Whooping Hollow, whose mysteries none could, and few cared to solve. (For though the wild, whooping sound, from which, in former times, the hollow took its name, is now never heard, save in echo to a human voice, the floating island is still pointed out to the traveller as his road winds around the basin at the bottom of which reposes the little lake of Cawaynoot.*) Others, again, regarded the story of Christian's adventures as affording positive evidence of the neighbourhood of Indians; and though "The Striped Huntsman," as he was called, might be at the bottom of the business, yet it was evident that a considerable band of mortals like themselves had been equally, with young Lansingh, misled by his deviltries and lured into their immediate neighbourhood. This last was, in fact, the view which old Balt took of the matter.

"Not," said the honest woodsman, "that the crittur whom folks call 'The Striped Huntsman' be ither a good sperrit or a bad sperrit, or whether or no there be any sperrit at all about the matter! Nother do I pretend to say, with some people, that the Striped Huntsman is only some roguish half-breed or outlawed Injun Medicine-man, who has pitched upon this unsettled part of the patent between the Scotch and German clearings and the Mohawk hunting grounds, as the very corner of the airth from which it was the business of no one in partikler to oust him, whatever shines he might cut up on his own hook. No, I leave it to the dom-

* Cawaynoot is the term for "island" in the Mohawk tongue. The lake is now generally called "Adam's Pond," from the name of a settler upon its banks.

ine, whose business it is to settle sich matters. (Pity the good man couldn't catch some droppings o' eloquence from yonder preaching brook to lifen his sarmints !) But I tell ye, boys, that if it be raaly the track of the crittur which lies fresh in our neighbourhood, it's not such an unlikely sperrit after all; for why may we not captivate some of the Redskins that it has coaxed toward us, and thus, mayhap, git tidings of the poor lost capting ?"

"Oh, Balt," said a hunter, "you are for ever thinking of poor Capten Max, whose bones must be long since cold."

"And for what else, Rhynier Peterson, did we come off on this tramp, if it was not that all of us had some thought of the capting ? And born heathens we'd a' been had we not come to look after him," added Balt, indignantly.

"Yes ; but, Balt," said another, "though we all of us followed you willingly enough at first, yet haven't we all determined long ago that is was a wildgoose chase you were leading us after ? Here, now, we've been fifty miles above here, poking about among mountains so big, that, if the summer ever manages to climb them, it is only to rest herself for a week or so, when she slants down the other side, and leaves the snow right off to settle in her place. The old 'North,' too, haven't we followed up the river to where it dodges about, trying to hide its raal head in a hundred lakes ? These lakes, moreover, haven't we slapped through them into five times as many more, and made portages up to the leetlest tricklings of some of them ? To be sure we have ; and what good has it done us, all this trampoosing and paddling hither and thither in this eternal wilderness ? We are now within ten miles of Lake George, and less than half that distance of the mouth of the Sacondaga, and my say is, either

to strike over at once to Fort William Henry, or to cross the river below the forks, and make the best of our way to Saratoga."

"And that's my say too," said a gray-headed hunter who had not yet spoken. "It's a fool's errand looking farther for the captain. I don't myself altogether believe that young Max is completely done for in this life; for we found traces enough of him in the deserted squaw camp last autumn; and if the Injuns kept him alive so long, he may yet wear his scalp in safety. But it all comes to the same thing if Brant has carried him off to Canada, where he'll be sure to keep him till these wars are over."

"What! you too, Hank Williams!" replied Balt, with a look of keen reproach at the last speaker; "you, who were the first to offer to take to the woods with me, and keep there till, dead or alive, we found the capting! Well, boys, I don't want to git riled with ye when, mayhap, we are jist upon the pint of a fight, where a man wants all his coolness; but I tell ye one thing, I came out here after young Max, and, dead or alive, I don't go in without him. You may drop off one by one, or go away the hull biling on ye together, ye may; but old Balt will not leave these woods till he gits fairly upon his trail; and, once upon it, he'll follow it up, if he has to streak it again clean through the mountains to Canada. So, now we understand each other, let's eat our dinner without no more words said about the matter, but go and look after these Injuns as soon as may be."

"Why, uncle," said Christian Lansingh, as the rest of the party now addressed themselves silently to the rude meal before them, "I've never thought for a moment of giving up the chase as long as you thought it well to go ahead."

"I know'd it, boy, I know'd it; the son of old

Christian and my nephew is not the chap to be skeered from his promise by some nigger nurse's gammon about the Striped Huntsman and such fooleries."

"Oh, our friends don't stickle about the matter we have now in hand," said another young hunter, modestly ; "but, you know, Balt, some of them have left their homes and—"

"Their *hums* ? And who in all natur wants a better hum nor this ? Here are walls that rise straight upward higher than any you see in housen, keeping the wind away, yet letting you step about where you choose without getting out o' doors—for these walls follow you, as it were, and close around you wherever you move ; and as for them as wants a fireside, why, aint the woods right full of clean hearth-stones and cosy nestling-places ? A *hum* ? Tormented lightning ! is it a soft bed ye want there, lads ? Why, isn't yonder mossy tussock as fresh and springy as e'er a pillow your good woman could shake up for ye—there, I mean, where that woof of vine-leaves, close as an Injun mat, spreads over to keep alike the sun and dewes away ? Lads, lads, I'm ashamed on ye to talk o' housen in a place like this, where the very light from heaven looks young and new—you may laugh, Bill, but it does, I say—the light o' God looks bright, and fresh, and tender here, as if it might a' been twinborn with the young Summer this very year—see only—jist see for yourselves how it scatters down through the green thatch of yonder boughs, which lift each moment as if some live and pleasant thing dropped from them on the sod below !"

"It is of those they have left at home," rejoined the young hunter, the moment that Balt, pausing to catch breath, allowed him to put in a word ; "our friends have left wives and families at home, whom they must look after in times like these ; but here's

half a dozen of us useless lads, who will keep the woods with you until you yourself shall say that we have made a clean thing of it."

The doughty Balt seemed to wince a little under the first of these remarks; for he was compelled to admit the force of it. He did not reply, however, save by patting the speaker on the shoulders, and nodding to him kindly as he buried his face in the flagon from which the whole of the company drank in succession. The rest of the meal was despatched in silence, and the party then made their preparations for proceeding to the spot where Christian Lansingh had last seen the mysterious footprints.

Leaving Balt and his crew of foresters to make a cautious and wary reconnoissance of this enchanted ground, let us give our attention to the two wanderers, whom the reader may soon have cause to suspect were the real flesh and blood actors in this game of woodland magic.

VOL. II.—D

CHAPTER XI.

THE FLIGHT FROM THE THUNDER'S NEST.

"He has left the green valley for paths where the bison
Roams through the forest or leaps o'er the flood ;
Where the snake in the swamp sucks the deadliest poison,
And the cat of the mountains keeps watch for its food ;
But the leaf shall be greener, the sky shall be purer,
The eye shall be clearer, the rifle be surer,
And stronger the arm of the fearless endurer
That trusts naught but Heaven in his way through the wood."
BRAINARD.

LET it bring no reproach to the manhood of Max Greyslaer, that now, in the very prime of youthful vigour, with a frame schooled by hardship to endurance of every kind, he must still depend upon female address to deliver him from bondage.

Twice already had he attempted, at the free peril of his life, to regain his liberty ; once, as we have before seen, when, lost in the mazes of the forest, he rushed again unawares directly into the arms of his enemy ; and again, during his abode in 'The Thunder's Nest,' he had, when nearly succeeding in the attempt, been overtaken in the deep snow-drifts, amid which he must have perished, even if successful, and hurried back in triumph to the Indian camp.

Then, upon this second recapture, he had undergone all the horrors of mind which must precede a death of Indian torture with those who have read or heard of its cruelly ingenious and protracted agonies. He had been subjected to all the savage preparations for the stake, and had then confronted

death in its most awful shape. He had seen the flames kindled around him. The fire-tipped arrows had been shot into his body, and torments far more excruciating were about to follow, when, as an Indian beldame advanced to tear the only remaining strip of vesture from his body, the *totem* of Brant imprinted upon it was revealed to the hellish crew of executioners around him, and saved him from a death so horrible.

Since that moment, though still strictly guarded, he had been treated with all the forbearance which characterized the conduct of the party which had brought him hither, though they had long since gone off and left him in other hands. But as, though wearing the insignia of an immediate follower of Thayendanagea, he had never undergone the ceremony of being formally adopted into any tribe of the Mohawks, he was conscious that his change of treatment arose only from his being now regarded rather as a slave than a prisoner. He was determined once more to seize an opportunity to escape, and to perish rather than be retaken. He relied much, however, it must be confessed, upon The Dew to make such opportunity for him. Nor was that hope and confidence misplaced.

Greyslaer, though much given to that half romantic, half philosophic mood of wrapping one's self up in one's own dreams and speculations, which belongs to that inexperienced season of life when we value our own thoughts far more than the material objects around us, was still not deficient in keen and curious observation of character. And for months it had been one of his chief mental resources to study the personal traits and peculiarities of the singular people among whom his present lot was cast.

He was sitting one morning a little aloof from a

group of loungers of all sexes and sizes, listening to a rude legend which an old woman, employed in weaving mats, was relating for their edification. The wild tradition with which she was engaged related to those strange subterranean sounds which are still, from time to time, heard among these mountains. She told of some bold hunter who went out determining to trace the spot whence these groanings of the earth had travelled out. And Greyslaer, who had looked with a curious eye upon the remarkable peculiarities of this volcanic region, bent near to hear how the strange fancy of an Iroquois would account for natural phenomena to whose existence he himself could bear testimony.

At this moment the report of a gun was heard not far off. It probably was discharged by some hunter belonging to the camp, and excited no attention among the listening group. Presently, however, The Dew, who had gone down to the shore of the lake to bring water, appeared, and saying aloud that the hunter who had just fired needed the assistance of the white man in bringing some game to camp, motioned Greyslaer the direction in which he should go, which, strangely enough, was in an opposite direction from that whence the sound came. The others were too much engaged with the storyteller to notice the discrepance, whose purport, however, was intuitively understood by the prisoner; and, before the approaching hunter had reached the camp on one side, he had gained a considerable distance on the other. He pierced far into the ravine through which the waters of the lake discharge themselves from the hollow, and now only hesitated which way to turn his steps. The ravine, though at first distinctly defined, had, within a few hundred yards of the lake, so broadened and broken up into a thousand rocky inequalities, that it was impossi-

ble, as the forest thickened around him, to tell what route to take in order to descend the mountain. The outlet of the lake would seem to have been a sufficient guide ; but this, a mere rill at its commencement, was broken up into a hundred slender threads of water, which, losing themselves now among matted leaves, and now creeping beneath the mossy woof which wraps the living rocks and the rotten trunks wedged between them, in the same green vesture, served only to distract the judgment that would lean upon them as a guide. Greyslaer, in fact, had only gained a lower and broader basin than that which held the waters of the lake ; and though it likewise was walled round by craggy pinnacles, yet here there was a heavy forest-growth ; and these barriers themselves, as well as the passage through them, were wholly screened from view by the intervening foliage.

But now, darting like a bird from the green wood covert, The Dew suddenly presents herself in the path before him, and beckons Greyslaer onward. As yet there are no signs of pursuit behind ; but the moments are precious ; for the descent of the mountain abounds in difficulties, and they have still a ravine to gain and a narrow gorge to pass through before gaining the bottom ; a gorge so narrow that it might serve as a gateway to this labyrinth of natural fortifications ; and here a single armed man might prevent their egress. The maiden now doubts for a moment what path to take. The sides of the ravine may be the safest, if they would avoid any chance wanderers returning to the Indian camp from the valley below. But these are every here and there broken by tall benches of rock too high to leap from, and doubling the toil of those who ever and anon must climb over the loose stones around their base. The girl, therefore, descends

still farther into the Hollow, where a sloping pavement of smooth rock, some hundred yards in length, seams the mountain. It looks as if it had been once overlaid by soil and forest growth like that around; but the stratum of matted roots and earths has been peeled off the steep declivity, and the fountains of a rivulet, oozing out from the compost of leaves and fibres which still overlay the upper end of the slope, glide with thin and noiseless flow over the naked rock. And now, as the shallow rill deepens into a brook, which gurgles among the loose boulders, they follow it down as it keeps its way through an easy swale of less broken land.

The woods upon its banks are here an open growth of ash and maple; and Greyslaer's confidence in the sagacity of his guide was for a moment shaken when he saw her persist in keeping her way along so exposed a path. He thought that they had already gained the base of the mountain, from the lofty and frowning cliffs of rock which now and then he could descry afar off, lifting themselves above the tree-tops around. He would fain have struck off to some thickets which, through these open glades, could be plainly seen crowning the lower and nearer ridges of rock that traversed the hillsides above them.

But the girl directed his attention in advance, and, for the first time, he saw the sunshine playing upon some spruce and cedar tree-tops that were immediately upon a level with his line of vision. She pointed to the brook, still their emulous companion, and he understood at once that it must have some sudden fall where those trees were growing. There must be a change of soil, rocks, and thickets there; a swamp, perhaps, and possibly one or more tributaries to the brook ere it reached the plain below. And, truly enough, the sound of a waterfall soon

greeted his ears. The sides of the swale became steeper, and it narrowed at last suddenly as if the ground had sunk. There were irregular walls of stone on either side, with springs welling here and there from their mossy intervals. Loose boulders clogged up the main current of the brook, which, foaming and fretting for a while, emerged at last from the rocky gorge, and took up a more stately march through the heavy forests that spread themselves over a richer soil below.

The fugitives followed on until that guiding water reached the Upper Hudson, where their toilsome descent from the Thunder's Nest, but not the peril of their flight, was ended.

The spot where they first gained the banks of the wild and romantic river of the North was a few miles above that beautiful pass called Teohoken by the Indians, where the dark-rolling waters which form the outlet of Scroon Lake sweep into the Hudson. Here Greyslaer quickly constructed a raft from the floating timbers which he found in profusion in the eddies of the stream; and the two voyagers drifted down with the current, till, reaching the rapids at the approach of night, they are compelled to betake themselves to an island which divides the waters of the Hudson just above its juncture with the Scroon, at Teohoken.

It is a strange situation for the youthful captain, when he finds himself alone at nightfall, with that beautiful, elfish creature, upon an island of the wilderness; but the Indian girl, seeming to take no thought of the peculiarity of her position, relieves him from the embarrassment of his. She points him to a mossy bank, where a clump of overshadowing basswood kept off the dew; and, retiring herself to a leafy hollow not far remote, the fatigues they have undergone soon plunge them both in

slumber, while the virgin moon, shining down upon an open interval between them, is their only sentinel through the night.

The voyagers gained the western shore with the break of dawn, and, following it down till they had passed the rapids, seized upon and appropriated a canoe which they found at the mouth of a little trouting brook which comes into the Hudson a short distance below the forks. In this they float down the rushing stream, which, with the Indian girl at the helm, and Greyslaer plying his active paddle at the prow, whirls their frail bark safely over its rocky channel. The rapid windings of the river and the overhanging woods, which at early day let down only here and there a burst of sunshine on its shadowy bosom, sweep them so quickly from alternate light to gloom, that the startled deer who drinks from the river's brink has scarcely time to fix his gaze ere the shifting pageant has passed away.

They came at last within sound of the falls of Tiosaronda, and, landing here on the western side of the river, near the base of Senongewoh, they circled the northern side of the hill, and struck into the forest in a direction towards Lake George, where Greyslaer hoped to find a military post occupied by his countrymen.

Hitherto our bold voyagers seemed to have been utterly free from pursuit. But now they had not advanced far into the forest, climbing two or three hilly ridges in succession, before Greyslaer's steps are arrested by a startling cry, which seems to come almost from beneath his very feet. He looks up, and sees The Dew with one foot advanced, her hands averted, as if motioning him back, while she herself gazes forward, as if trying to pierce a shadowy glen that yawned across her path. The yell

is again repeated from below, and the maid, cowering toward the ground, makes signs to Greyslaer to imitate her movements. Crouching as she commands, he ventures, however, to approach with stealthy caution to the place where she stands. The Dew gently moves the tilting boughs of a stunted hemlock which is rifted in the side of the cliff on whose edge she hovers : a sprinkling of light shows upon the bald rock, and, as Max peers through the leafy grating, which the hand of the maid has partially removed, the cause of her agitation is at once revealed to him.

A band of Mohawks were clustered around what seemed to be the fresh track of a white man in the forest. Greyslaer, from the intervening foliage, could by no means distinguish the object at which the Indians pointed, but the significant gestures of the whole party left no doubt upon his mind that the joyful discovery of an enemy's trail had caused the wild yell which first startled him and his companion. The Indians had apparently been pursuing their way through the ravine in a direction nearly parallel to that which he was traversing. The next moment, and the whole band had disappeared from beneath his eye ; the Mohawks vanishing behind the gray trees so suddenly and silently, that, as their painted forms and tufted plumage disappear amid the dark foliage, it seems as if some wild vision of the forest has melted amid its glooms ; and he almost expects them to reappear the next moment by his side from beneath the rugged bark of the huge oaks around him ; such as unfolded to release the fabled Dryads of old.

The Dew waited until sufficient time had elapsed for the Indians to gain several hundred yards, and then, motioning to Greyslaer to tread carefully in her footsteps, descended the steep bank a few paces

and commenced moving rapidly along the hillside. She had not proceeded far in this direction, however, before, coming to a spot where some huge rocks, covered only with dogbriers, let down the light too broadly into the forest, she turned abruptly from the path, thriddled the thorny defile, and, crossing to the opposite side of the ridge, regained the point from which she had recently started. The old path was then followed back for full a mile, and then again as suddenly left as before. Four distinct trails were thus made to branch out at intervals from that which Greyslaer and his guide were actually travelling; and the maid, seeming content with these precautions, now kept the way steadily forward; save that, ever and anon, she would pause for a moment in some more open glade, poise herself upon some fallen trunk, throw a keen but furtive glance around her, and then flit lightly as a bird from its perch into the leafy shadows beyond.

A deep swamp received them next; and no youth less light of foot than Greyslaer could have kept up with the forest damsel as she glided from one half-floating tussock to another, her feet scarce touching the black and slippery logs, which, plunged as they were in the slimy mould, afforded yet the firmest stepping-place around.

A *windfall* upon the hillside was to be traversed next. The uprooted trees, wrenched from their ancient seats by the tornado's force, lay with their twisted stems, their boughs fast locked together, their enormous roots turned vertically to the sky, with fragments of rock and clay matted by their fibres, and walling one side of the pit from which they had been upturned, while barriers of rankly-grown briers enclosed the others. But the splintered tree, the thorny copse, the deep pitfalls, the palisade of gnarled roots and jagged rocks protru-

ding from them, offered no obstacle to the fairy footsteps of The Dew. The little crossbill of the mountain, the bird that best loves the "windfall," and whose twinkling form and brown and gray plumage is often the only object that enlivens these ghastly wrecks of the forest, seemed hardly more at home among them.

A tract of level land was gained at last. It was a pine barren, where the tree sshot upward, a hundred feet or more, with not a leaf of underwood around their stems, with not a shrub below them, and scarcely a green bough appearing to break the monotonous range of columns, save those which formed the verdant roof which shut in this solemn temple. The brown maid here told her white companion to take the lead. She pointed through an almost straight vista between the interminable trunks; and Greyslaer, seeing his way before him, stepped fleetly forward, his companion treading cautiously in his footsteps upon the yielding sand.

They had nearly crossed these dangerously open glades, when Greyslaer suddenly felt a light hand upon his shoulder; he turned and saw the girl pointing, with an agitated look, to an object that was advancing toward them nearly in the direct line they were travelling. It was an Indian just emerging from the thickets of ash and maple that grew upon the edge of the barren. A few moments more, and they would have gained the same leafy covert.

The girl in an instant knew the man for a Mohawk. She waited not to see whether he was followed by others. It might be one of the same band she had seen a few hours before upon the trail of the white hunter; and, if so, all her efforts to avoid them had but involved her friend in their toils. But whether it were the same or another party of her tribesmen, it mattered not; the life of Greys-

laer now depended more than ever upon her faithful and sagacious guidance. The Indian paused and looked backward, as if awaiting the coming up of his party. The Dew seized the moment, and, followed by Greyslaer, sped backward on her path. She crossed and recrossed it repeatedly, Greyslaer now in his turn stepping lightly and carefully in her footprints, so as to cover, yet not wholly erase them, while their way yet lay through the sands of the pine barren.

They gained at last the thick greenwood, where the deciduous trees imbowered their path, and the elastic carpet of moss and wild flowers, and spongy trunks o'ergrown with juniper, and tangled thickets of mosswood and wytch-hopple, gave now the springy footing the tired hunter loves, and now afforded the deep covert where the hounded deer will seek to hide.

Proceeding thus in a westward direction, the fugitives soon found themselves again within sight of the river, and near the very place where they had landed in the morning. The current ran swiftly, but they did not hesitate to ford it, and clamber a mountainous ridge opposite. They paused upon a lofty ledge of rock to look back, and saw their pursuers already in the stream. They crossed the ridge, and descended to the other side. They gained the banks of another river not larger than the first, but hesitated to cross ; for the yell of the Indians was echoed from the rocks above them, and they feared to be seen while making the passage. Whither shall they now fly ? They turn and follow down the stream, though it leads them nearly in the direction from which the pursuit is coming ; but their only hope is in doubling thus upon their tracks. They make the point where the two branches meet and mingle their waters. They turn to leave the

stream they have been following, and clamber up the sides of the glen through which it flows, and find themselves upon a narrow isthmus, with another stream, deeper and far more violent, roaring around its rocky base. Greyslaer approached the verge of the precipice, and despaired of proceeding farther. The cliff opposite was steep as that whereon they stood. The main stream, whose tributary it seemed he had been last traversing, had here cloven its way through a rocky ridge in a channel so narrow that any of the trees around him would span the black chasm. But he had no axe to fell one, nor would he have dared to disturb the echoes of the forest if one were at hand.

At this moment the shrill whoop of the Mohawks rose fearfully behind him. They were near. He spoke a few words to his companion, seized a pendant vine that flourished near the spot, and flung himself out from the face of the cliff, as if determined to drop into the roaring current, and take his chance for escape in its angry bosom. He cast one glance back on the maid ere he let himself drop in the tide below. She had not sprung forward to prevent him, but stood with folded arms and a look of indignant sorrow upon her brow. Was it mingled scorn and pity that he should thus desert his preserver? So thought Greyslaer, as, still holding his grasp on the vine, he permitted himself to swing back by her side. "Surely you can swim, and do not shrink from trying that stream with me," he cried.

"Were my brother an otter, he could not live in that terrible water," replied the maiden.

The whoop was again pealed nearer and more near; it rose, too, this time, from a dozen savage voices. The girl wrung her hands as if in despair, while Greyslaer folded his arms and leaned against

a tree, as if moodily resigned to his fate. Suddenly, however, the thought of a new device inspires The Dew. She clammers like a squirrel toward the tree-top from which the vine depends ; loosing a long and vigorous tendril from the stem as she ascends, she quickly passes another and a smaller one round it, so as to attach it firmly to a projecting bough ; descends a few yards, and, grasping the vine tightly in her hands, darts out from the wall of foliage like a swallow from the face of a cliff, clears the chasm, and lands safely upon a dizzy ledge opposite.

Greyslaer, who, unappalled for himself, had but a few moments before hung suspended over the gulf below, covers his face with his hands in the instant the daring feat is in the act of being accomplished ; and, almost ere he can look again, the maid has recrossed the chasm and dropped nimbly by his side. But why do they still delay ? The sound of pursuit grows nigher, yet Max refuses to take the chance of escape, of which his noble guide has so daringly set him the example, until she herself is in a place of safety. The breath of an instant is precious—and now The Dew again makes the airy passage, and is followed by her friend the instant he can recover the vine as it swings back within his reach. The Dew, with Indian precaution, seizes it once more as he is thoughtlessly about releasing it from his grasp, and, winding the end around a heavy stone, she hands it to Max, and signifies to him to throw it into a thicket upon the same side of the stream whereon it grew. The two have then barely time to plunge into the bushes beyond them, when the pursuing Mohawks appear upon the headland opposite, and they soon after hear their baffled howl of disappointment at the broken and lost trail of the fugitives.

CHAPTER XII.

A NIGHT IN THE WHOOPING HOLLOW.

"Then sweet the hour that brings release
From danger and from toil,
We talk the battle over,
And share the battle's spoil."

Song of Marion's Men.

"A gentle arm entwines her form, a voice is in her ear,
Which even in death's cold grasp itself 'twould win her back to
hear;

Now happy is that Santee maid, and proudly bless'd is he,
And in her face the tear and smile are strangely sweet to see."

SIMMS.

THE Whooping Hollow lay now directly in their route to Fort George, and thither the footsteps of the fugitives were directed. The Dew was faint from hunger, and the weary spirits of Greyslaer were anything but cheered by the desolate scene of that swampy-shored lake, with here and there a dead tree waving the long moss from its gray arms as it stood solitary amid the half-floating bog. All concern for himself, however, was forgotten in distressing anxiety for his companion.

They had still eight or ten miles to travel to reach Fort William Henry, and the day was nearly spent. But now a new source of interest presents itself to stimulate his nerves. He hears a distant volley of firearms, followed by a broken but rapid discharge, as of a running fight beyond the hills. It nears him, and he fancies he can hear the rallying shout of white combatants mingling hoarsely with the shrill yell of Indian onslaught. Unarmed as he is, Greyslaer bounds forward, as if to aid those of his own blood, who, it would seem, are borne down in

the battle. He turns to give one look to his companion. The languid eyes of the Iroquois girl kindle with new life as she motions to him to leave her to her fate and rush forward.

But now, again, another volley, another shout, and then the Indian whoop grows fainter and fainter, as of men scattered and fleeing in pursuit. He listens intently, but the sounds of the battle have died away in the distance.

The twilight has come, the night closes in, and again the moon marches up the heavens to cheer the wanderers, if, indeed, her ghastly light, shining down among those haggard trees, and gleaming upon the pool that has settled in that dreary hollow, have aught of cheering in it. The gentle-souled Greyslaer looks often into the deep and languid eyes of the suffering and innocent-hearted girl who has dared and endured so much for him. He blames himself for having permitted her to encounter the perils they have undergone; not the least of which, that of starvation in the wilderness, they are now beginning to realize. The fort, it is true, is not far; but will The Dew have strength to reach it on the morrow?

He has made her a couch of fern and leaves, where the cradling roots of an ancient birch supply her mossy pillow; and now she shrinks not from his ministering care as he sits near, watching till her eyes be closed in slumber. But hark! there are other human sounds in the forest besides the cry of the whooping savage or the distant din of border conflict. Can it be a crew of merry-makers, or is it only the echoes of the place which wake in chorus to the song now trolled along the hillside:

“Room, boys, room, by the light of the moon,
Oh why shouldn't every man enjoy his own room?
Enough in the green wood, if not in the hall,
By the light of the moon there's enough for us all.”

"Hist! hallo there, white man! where the devil do you come from?" cried the foremost of the forest choir, advancing from under the boughs into the moonlight, and levelling his rifle upon Greyslaer as he spoke. "King or Congress! Speak up, my good fellow, if you've got a tongue."

"De Roos!"

"Whose voice is that? Good God! Max Greyslaer, is it your living self that I hold in my arms?" And the impetuous brother of Alida—for it was no other than Derrick himself—drew back from the embrace of Greyslaer, into which he had thrown himself, to look earnestly into the wan features of his long-lost friend. Their aspect of suffering filled him with emotions which he could only conceal in part, as, turning round, he shouted to his comrades,

"Balt, Lansingh, Miller, carry on, men, carry on. Here are more wonders in the woods to-night than those we've yet dreamed of."

But Balt had heard the first joyful cry of recognition between the friends, and was already hugging Greyslaer in his arms with an unceremonious vigour, that sensibly reminded Greyslaer of De Roos's unfortunate speech, assimilating him to a bear, which had once given such deep offence to the worthy woodsman. The salutations of the other hunters, though, of course, less familiar, were hardly less hearty, as Balt stood by and proudly encouraged them to come up and take the hand of his old pupil.

"Didn't I tell ye, boys," said he, "that young Max would come to hand the right side up? Alive? eh! only look at the young springald. Thin and raw-boned as he is, there's life enough in him to squeeze it out of any of us. Law sorts, Capting Max, how your shoulders have spread; and your face, too, is as brown as Kit Lansingh's here. Kit,

you land-lougher, stand up and measure heights with the capting."

But Greyslaer had turned away, and was bending with anxious solicitude over a figure that had hitherto escaped the notice of his friends. "Some water, Balt ; quickly, in the name of Heaven, quickly, old man. She faints, she faints," said Greyslaer, in tones of almost agonizing solicitude, as he supported the sinking head of The Dew upon his bosom. "Ah ! they'll be an age in returning from the lake. Your canteen, De Roos ; a drop from that may yet revive her."

De Roos tore the canteen from his side ; and, as Max applied the cordial to her lips, the maid opened her eyes.

"Have you no refreshment—a single biscuit in your pouch ?" asked Greyslaer.

"Here's a corn-cake, captain," said a hunter, handing a fragment of the coarse bread to Greyslaer.

"Yes, and we can soon get you up plenty of venison," cried Lansingh, who now returned from the lake-side with the water, for which two or three of his comrades had simultaneously rushed together.

"Off, then, with you at once, Kit," rejoined Balt, who now came puffing and blowing up the hill. "We must needs camp here, I take it ; for the gal's state won't allow her removal to-night. Who'd a' guessed, though, of finding a petticoat here with the capting ?"

"Carry on, boys, carry on, then ; get up your shanties as soon as may be," said De Roos, while those of the hunters who had not gone off with Lansingh after the remains of the deer upon which they had already feasted, bestirred themselves on every side. Some cut stakes and rafters for the frame of the wigwam ; some peeled the heavy bark from ancient

hemlocks, which, though prostrate upon the ground, had not yet mouldered ; spreading the broad pieces over the roof and adown the sides ; while others strewed the floor of the shanty with the fragrant branches shorn from the living tree, after felling it for the purpose of being thus stripped. Some busied themselves in kindling a fire before the opening of this sylvan shed, while the forest resounded with the stroke of the axe, as others felled the hard-wood trees, chopped them up, and piled them near to feed the growing flame when wanted.

Greyslaer, in the mean time, now that his anxiety about "The Dew" was relieved, summarily detailed his principal adventures, speaking always of the disinterested and heroic Indian girl in terms that would have deepened even the colour of her red cheek could she have understood the language in which they were uttered. De Roos, in return, gave him information of both a public and private nature which claimed his deepest interest.

"But tell me, De Roos," cried Greyslaer, "how came you in these woods with old Balt?"

"With old Balt? Why, an hour since, I believed truly that he was a hundred miles from here, as I did that you, dear Max, were enjoying the hospitality of our refugee friends in Canada. Balt must tell you himself how he came here ; for I deferred hearing his story till we gained his camp, whither he was conducting me when I fell in with you."

"But yourself ; how came you here yourself?"

"Oh, why, you know, we are only a few miles from the fort ; so it's no great wonder that I should be here. Van Schaick sent me yesterday to look after some batteaux at Glen's Falls, which are sent up from below for the transportation of the baggage of the command which, you know, has been relieved."

"I know? How should I know anything about the matter, or imagine, even, that you were at Fort George, or who, indeed, was its commandant?"

"True, ay, true; I forgot how you have been cooped up in these stirring times. Well, you see, as I was about to mention, an incidental part of my duty led me back to the lake by this route, which is only a few miles longer to the fort. Gansevoort, our lieutenant-colonel, got some information from Albany a day or two since about that cutthroat Tory, Joe Bettys, who—"

"Joe Bettys, the cutthroat Tory!" cried Greyslaer, echoing his words in astonishment. "What, not Ensign Joe Bettys, who was so ardent a Whig, albeit a boon companion and crony of the Tory Bradshawe?"

"The same man, Max; and a brave Whig, too, he proved himself under Arnold in Canada. But, either from some disgust with our officers, or an original want of principle, he has been won over to the other side, and commenced his Tory career in a dashing style, that must make him long remembered in these parts. He is said to have taken up his quarters here in the Whooping Hollow, and, assuming the disguise of a mongrel mountebank, an outcast Indian vagrant, whom he killed, he has practised so successfully upon the superstitious fears of the people below, that they would make no effort to follow and seize him upon his retreating here after some deed of blood or plunder. So I took an Indian guide, and came poking through here to see if I could beat up his quarters in passing, or, at least, light upon his trail."

"And you fell in with Balt—"

"Just in time to lend a volley which saved him from a devil of a licking; for he and his handful of hunters were mad enough to engage with a score

of Mohawks, led on, as I suspect, by Isaac Brant, or Au-neh-yesh, as he calls himself."

"Isaac Brant? Why, I have already told you that I left him upon the shores of a lake far west of this, a dying man, as I thought, and—"

"Ay, but that was some six months' since, if I understood you rightly; and I assure you he is bloody Isaac Redivivus now. Everybody has nine lives in these times. Isaac I know at least to be alive and kicking; for, with Kasselman Empie and other scoundrelly Tories who fight under the disguise of Indians, he makes as much noise in this neighbourhood as his father, with fifty times the number of men, is creating along the Unadilla region. There is, though, a touch of humanity about old Joseph that his son is wholly innocent off."

"And you think, then, that Isaac's tribesmen, who were in pursuit of me, guided him hither to-night?"

"Even so."

"But the friendly Indian who was your pioneer to the Hollow, I don't see him here."

"He loitered behind, where I left my corporal to bury some two or three brave fellows whom I have lost by this night's business. By-the-way, it is our old boyish friend Teondetha. The Tryon county committee sent him as a runner to Albany, whence he was despatched with the message to the fort, requiring the presence of our regiment to overawe the Tories on the Mohawk. But here comes Miller and his men. You put those brave boys to bed safely, Miller?"

"Safely and snugly, captain; neither wolves nor Indians will trouble them, I reckon," replied the corporal, touching his hat.

"Where's the Oneida?"

"He cleared out as soon as he had taken the hair of the Redskins that fell on the other side. I mis-

trust he has followed on to see if he couldn't add another scalp to his string."

"It's the natur of all of them," ejaculated Balt; "dog eating dog. He must have had good picking, too, among the dead varmint, Adam; for there they lay on the grass, six big buck Injuns, likely fellows all, besides a withered chap that I clipped over with my hatchet, and left to curl up and die."

"And the boy," said De Roos, without heeding Balt's words, in a slight tone of anxiety; "you saw nothing of the boy, Adam?"

"Nothing, captain! The brat was missing from the moment we came in sight of the enemy. Isaac's people must have swooped him up in a moment; and he doubtless was glad enough to go with them."

"What boy is that you speak of?" asked Greyslaer, with some anxiety.

"Nobody—nothing—only a half-breed brat that we picked up on our march. Near the falls, wasn't it, Miller?"

"Yes, captain, in the shanty at the batteaux landing which you visited when we went down afore, you know. That time, I mean, when you had high words with the old woman, because you said you knew better when she declared that the child ought rightfully to belong to Isaac Brant, whose son he was, and when—"

"Silence, sir," commanded De Roos, who seemed both irritated and annoyed by the loquacity of his non-commissioned officer. "There was no child there at the time, you know well, Miller."

"Certing! there was not, capt'ing; but you know you asked when next he would be there, or his mother, I forget which."

"Well, well, it's no matter what you forget, so you don't forget your duty, which no one can accuse you of, my brave fellow. And now let your

men build another fire for themselves, for here come the hunters with something to make a broil of."

Greyslaer, in the mean time, had listened to this dialogue with an interest much beyond that of ordinary curiosity. The early dissipation of Mad Dirk de Roos, as his friend was universally called when they were college mates together, was not unknown to him; for, though younger than Derrick, yet, being of a graver and more earnest character, he had often taken upon himself the duty of an older person in lecturing his hair-brained chum. He recollected well that, during one of their vacation visits to the Hawksnest, the scandal of the country people had associated De Roos's name with that of a beautiful squaw, whom those connected with the Indian office at Guy Park said was betrothed to Isaac Brant. He remembered, too, that, one Christmas morning, Guy Johnson rode over to the Hawksnest with a magistrate, who was at the Park enjoying the hospitality of the season, and closeted themselves with his guardian, De Roos's father, upon business which, though deemed by the family to be of a political nature, had filled him with anxiety for his friend, who was absent at the time. And more facts and reminiscences equally linked together, and having the bearing of strong circumstantial evidence upon this delicate matter, might have suggested themselves to Greyslaer's mind, had he not suddenly been startled from his painful musings by a wild cry of joy from The Dew as Teondetha suddenly presented himself in the light of the fire before her.

The maid recoiled abashed and agitated the instant she had uttered this natural outbreak of her feelings, while Teondetha, who, with noiseless step, had approached to light his calumet by the fire, started erect from his stooping posture, and gazed

with eagle glance around. But the girl had sunk back upon the pile of brush upon which she was reclining in one corner of the shanty, and the tall spire of flame which shot up between them prevented her for a moment from being seen by her lover. De Roos, in high spirits, as usual, was busy superintending the preparations for supper at the different fires, and joking with the men grouped around them as he restlessly moved to and fro from one to the other. Greyslaer alone had his eye upon the Indian pair, and, as he now fully understood their language, he was not a little amused with the cool generalship with which the Oneida made his advances.

"My sister," said Teondetha, seating himself on a log near the opening of the shanty, the moment he discovered the vicinity of his lady-love ; "how is it with her ?"

"As with the bird that has been driven from its nest, and knows not where to alight. As with the sunbeam that drops into the forest, and finds no sister ray to receive and mingle with her beneath its chilling leaves."

"Teondetha is the tree whereon the bird would alight.* His bosom is the fountain that would send back a ray to mingle with the sunbeam. Teondetha is a great warrior. He must build a lodge of his own, wherein to hang up the scalps of his enemies. Who will be there to light the pipe of the young chief ?"

The girl, so far from shrinking at sight of the gory trophies at his belt, gazed now admiringly upon them as her half-savage lover held them up to her eyes.

"The young chief has earned a right to smoke before the women," she said. "The Dew will not extinguish his pipe when he lights it."

* The meaning of Teondetha is "a fallen tree."

"Good!" said the copper-coloured gallant; and, bending over the coals, he carelessly swept up one with his hand, and dropped it into the bowl of his pipe. He puffed away calmly for a few moments, while his thoughts seemed occupied only in watching the smoke-wreaths that circled around him.

"What sees my brother in the smoke?" asked the girl, after watching her taciturn wooer for a while.

"A bird," replied the Indian, gravely.

The girl smiled, was silent for a moment, and then looking down rather demurely, and pulling to pieces the twigs whereon she sat, asked,

"What says the bird to my brother?"

"It says that Teondetha is a tree whose leaves will only flourish by The Spreading Dew."

The girl laughed outright (girls *will* laugh!), but the solemn composure of her companion seemed nowise disturbed by her merriment. The laugh, however, ceased at once, without subsiding into a titter.

"And what does my brother see now?" she resumed, so soon as she had recovered her sobriety.

"He sees a beaver."

"And what says the beaver?"

"The beaver reminds him of a promise which The Dew made many moons ago, off by the yellow waters that flow from Garoga Lake. The beaver says that those of his tribe who have no lodge become worthless castaways. 'Teondetha,' says the beaver, 'let not The Dew go out of your sight again till you have built one for both of you.'"

"The beaver is never foolish," murmured the girl.

A heavy puff of smoke from the fire at that moment wrapped the lovers from Greyslaer's sight, and he could not see whether the Indian pair sealed this

important passage of their courtship with the impress that fairer wooers would perhaps have used ; but, as the smoke cleared away, he thought that he distinguished The Dew withdrawing her little hand from that of Teondetha, who had slightly changed his position.

"Carry on, carry on," cried De Roos, at this moment, inviting all parties to supper in his favourite phrase, which, like the "push along, keep moving," of English farce, or the "go ahead" of modern American slang, served him alike upon all occasions, and was equally in requisition whether at feast or fray.

Greyslaer, who had eaten nothing, as yet, save a biscuit which he got from the knapsack of a slain soldier, upon which he had been seated near the fire, was sufficiently sharp-set to fall to with a keen relish of the fare now placed before him.

"There's the cup by your side, capting, if it's that ye're looking for. Lean over, now, with your cracker here, till I put this slice of venison upon it. It's done to a crisis, I tell ye ; brown on the outside, and juicy red within. The crittur himself would be tempted to taste one of his own cutlets, if he were of a flesh-faring natur. There, now, add the salt and pepper fixings, and the king himself hasn't a slicker supper. Never mind the squaw, never mind the squaw, capting ; Scalpy yonder will look after her." And running on thus while he acted as cook, butler, and waiter for Greyslaer, old Balt, ever on the alert to serve him, eyed his pupil at intervals with an affectionate interest, as if it cheered his very heart to see the half-famished wanderer relishing this rude entertainment.

"Ah, capting," he resumed, "but Miss Alida will be glad to see you. We've had some rare doings in the valley since you were missed from among us.

Sir John, as you mayhap know, broke his parole and cleared out for Canada, after being stolen off by old Joseph, who cut his way at midnight through the streets of Johnstown in taking him from the Hall. Folks talk hard of the baronet for leaving as he did; but Balt could have told them something which would prove he was not so much to blame. He thought he wasn't safe, he did, after the killing of Mr. Fenton during the armistice between the Whigs and Tories. But Mr. Fenton, you know, sought his own death; and, sorry as I was for it, how could I help smashing him as I did? You don't think I could, capting?"

"It was a bad business, Balt; but, according to the account which Captain De Roos gave me to-night, you were certainly not to blame."

"I mistrust I wasn't—I raaly hope not; but Mr. Fenton was a fine man, a likely man, capting, and it was some comfort to me to give him Christian burial. I sent home his watch, and what little money he had about him, to his family; and the two or three papers I found in his pocket I kept till you should come back to tell me what to do about them. What else could I? I never had book-larnin enough to read written hand, and I didn't know but what the papers might hold political matters of some value to our friends; yet I was afeard to give them to strangers to read, lest there might be private things in them about Mr. Fenton's folks that the family would not like to have go abroad."

"Where are the papers now?" asked Greyslaer.

"Miss Alida sealed them up for me, and put them away in the old brass beaufet at the Hawksnest; but she looked, oh! so sad when I told her that they must stay there till you came hum, that I was sorry I had not still continued to carry them about in my shooting-pouch with me. But how did I know but

that I should leave my pouch and scalp both among these wild hills ?”

“ You did most rightly, Balt,” said Greyslaer, not untouched by these proofs of the just sense of propriety which seemed to govern the simple woodsman. “ But see, that tired girl has already dropped her head upon her arm, as if sleep had overtaken her. Let us withdraw from the neighbourhood of the shanty to the other fire, and see what disposition of us Captain De Roos proposes for the night.”

“ Yes, and there’s the Oneida stretched like a hound upon the edge of the ashes, so that no one can enter the shanty without stepping over him. It is but judgmatical for us to look for a snoozing-place elsewhere.”

De Roos, however, when they joined his party a few yards off, seemed to have no idea of any one’s seeking their rest so soon. He had just relieved the sentinels who had been posted here and there in the woods around, and the rest of his half-disciplined followers were ready enough to unite with Balt’s hunters in the chorus, as the mad captain again broke out in the song with which he had first waked the echoes of the forest round about, and which he had originally learned from old Balt himself. Greyslaer, however, borrowing a blanket from one of the soldiers, was permitted to forego a part in this midnight saturnalia of the forest ; for his plea of excessive weariness was admitted when De Roos remembered that they must reach Fort George early on the morrow, if they would have a place in the column when his regiment took up their line of march. The wayworn heir of the Hawksnest was soon plunged in deep slumber ; but the words of the following song ever and anon mingled in his dreams, as the woodland revellers bore down merrily in the chorus.

SONG OF BALT THE HUNTER.

1.

There was an old hunter camped down by the kill,
Who fished in this water and shot on that hill ;
The forest for him had no danger nor gloom,
For all that he wanted was plenty of room.
Says he, " The world's wide, there is room for us all ;
Room enough in the green wood, if not in the hall."
Room, boys, room, by the light of the moon,
For why shouldn't every man enjoy his own room ?

2.

He wove his own mats, and his shanty was spread
With the skins he had dressed and stretched out overhead ;
The branches of hemlock, piled deep on the floor,
Was his bed as he sung when the daylight was o'er,
" The world's wide enough, there is room for us all ;
Room enough in the green wood, if not in the hall."
Room, boys, room, by the light of the moon,
For why shouldn't every man enjoy his own room ?

3.

That spring, half choked up by the dust of the road,
Through a grove of tall maples once limpidly flowed ;
By the rock whence it bubbles his kettle was hung,
Which their sap often filled, while the hunter he sung,
" The world's wide enough, there is room for us all ;
Room enough in the green wood, if not in the hall."
Room, boys, room, by the light of the moon,
For why shouldn't every man enjoy his own room ?

4.

And still sung the hunter—when one gloomy day
He saw in the forest what saddened his lay,
'Twas the rut which a heavy-wheeled wagon had made,
Where the greensward grows thick in the broad forest glade—
" The world's wide enough, there is room for us all ;
Room enough in the green wood, if not in the hall."
Room, boys, room, by the light of the moon,
For why shouldn't every man enjoy his own room ?

5.

He whistled his dog, and says he, " We can't stay ;
I must shoulder my rifle, up traps, and away."
Next day, mid those maples, the settler's axe rung,
While slowly the hunter trudged off as he sung,
" The world's wide enough, there is room for us all ;
Room enough in the green wood, if not in the hall."
Room, boys, room, by the light of the moon,
For why shouldn't every man enjoy his own room ?

CHAPTER XIII.

ESTRANGEMENT.

“Where love, that cannot perish, grows
For one, alas ! that little knows
How love may sometimes last ;
Like sunshine wasting in the skies,
When clouds are overcast.”—DAWES.

“Is the prayer rejected—the suit disdained ?
The pleadings of love—are they vain ?
Has the student no lore, has his voice no skill,
To bring back lost smiles again ?”—MRS. EMBURY.

GLAD rumours of the success which had finally crowned the hunter Balt in his wild-wood quest preceded the arrival of the popular young Max among his old friends and neighbours. It were difficult to define the emotions of Alida when the news of his deliverance from captivity and death first reached her ears. For, though joy and delight for Greyslaer's escape first swallowed up all other feelings, yet painful reflections succeeded, and doubts and fears crept into her mind, to alloy this generous burst of heartfelt sensibility.

She felt, she owned to herself, that, despite the difference of years (and most slight was that disparity), she *could* have loved her youthful worshipper. But this thought had only been admitted into her heart when she believed the barrier of the grave was closed between them. How was it now with her when Greyslaer lived ? lived, while a barrier more hideous even than that of the grave must keep them apart for ever ! But why dwell now upon her past relations with Greyslaer ? Why imbitter

her hours by musing upon their possible future position toward each other ?

Long months had intervened since the passionate declaration of her almost boyish lover. There was time enough even for him to have forgotten his youthful fancy, or exchanged it for another, if some fair face had presented itself to him when away from her. Besides, had she not revealed that to him which must crush all hope upon the instant ? Surely he could not have gone on feeding with vain dreams of what *might be* his misplaced and most unfortunate attachment—had he not consumed a captive's long and lonely hours in such fruitless and embittered musings upon his baffled affections ? His sorrows must have been those only of a young and ardent mind, that grieves to find itself cut off, in the season of its vigour, from the paths of ambition which men so love to tread ; his dreams, only those which will crowd into a mind fertile as his when planning his escape from present evil—a prisoner's dreams of home and friends, of free will and unrestricted motion, and the bright world which, fresh as ever, was to be enjoyed again.

Alida hoped that it might be so ; yet, somehow, she grew sad even in so hoping ! A sensible and modest mind is not merely flattered, but substantially raised in its own estimation by the sincere and unaffected attachment of another as well constituted as itself, even when it cannot return the passion. And though it can hardly, with precision, be said to either grieve or humble us when that regard passes away, yet there is something of sorrow, something of humiliation, when we become assured of its decay.

In the mean time the presumed heiress of the Hawksnest had not wanted for admirers, though the natural imperiousness of her disposition pre-

pared a haughty rebuff for more than one who made haste to address the beautiful orphan, even in her first secluded months of mourning. The advances of some of these suiters were well known in the neighbourhood, and their supposed rejection, when they successively withdrew from the field, became very naturally the talk of the country people, who, when Greyslaer's return from captivity was bruited abroad, unanimously agreed that Fate had intended that he should be the happy man. "Surely," they argued, "young Max would never take possession of the estate which Miss Alida had so long enjoyed as his nearest kinswoman, and the co-heir of Mad Derrick, without offering first to make her his wife ? And where was the girl in the valley that would refuse *him* ? Proud and uppish as she was, old De Roos, though a respectable man enough, and the old friend of Sir William, was no such great shakes, after all, that his daughter might turn up her nose upon the only son of Colonel Greyslaer that was."

As for Max himself, it was agreed, without any dissent, that he would seek a wife forthwith. He was the last of his name ; and, though sternly republican in his political principles, democracy entered not into his ideas of the social relations, and he was believed to inherit from his stately old father sufficient pride of family not to wish the name of Greyslaer to expire with himself.

Max, in the mean while, wholly unconscious that he and his affairs were furnishing the only subject of gossip to the good wives of the neighbourhood, now that the storm of war had rolled away from the valley for a season, and left leisure for such harmless themes, disappointed every one by the quietude of his proceedings. A lawyer from the county town calling upon Miss De Roos, informed her

that Captain Greyslaer, being about to join his regiment, which belonged to a brigade of volunteers that had recently been draughted into the service of Congress, he had no idea of taking possession of the Hawksnest, and that Miss De Roos would add to the obligations which Captain Greyslaer already felt himself under to her late lamented father, if she would continue to preside over an establishment which must otherwise be broken up, and perhaps fall to ruins; for the aged housekeeper was now too infirm for the charge, and Captain Greyslaer was at a loss what disposition to make of his other servants in times so disturbed. "The captain," said the lawyer, looking round upon the ancient furniture, "seems to have his heart bent upon keeping these old sticks together, and there is no one but you, madam, to whom he can look, as one feeling the same sort of interest in the place as that which he cherishes."

The latter part of his agent's statement was enforced by a note from Greyslaer, containing an eloquent appeal to her on the score of their mutual childish associations, and the impracticability of his making any humane disposition of his black servants; for manumitting them—a resource which had suggested itself—would, in the existing state of the country, be, in fact, the cruellest thing he could do, there being now no employment for labourers of that class.

Alida, who had not been left unprovided for by her father, and was, therefore, not thus rendered dependant upon the bounty of a distant kinsman, who stood toward her in the delicate relation of a discarded lover, scarcely hesitated in her determination. She would remain beside the graves of her father and sister, and consider herself as mistress of the Hawksnest until Captain Greyslaer was pre-

pared to enter into his possessions ; but it must be as a tenant upon the same terms that her father had held the property.

A month or more had elapsed after the adjustment of this delicate matter, and Greyslaer, writing weekly to her from Albany and New-York, whither his professional duty had led him, managed always in his letters to preserve a tone of easy friendliness, such as had prevailed between them in the younger days of their intercourse. This composure upon paper, however, vanished entirely when at last they met. The frank cordiality which Greyslaer assumed was rather overdoing nature, as Alida thought when she observed his rapid utterance and restless motions ; and Greyslaer was conscious that Alida trembled with agitation when he smilingly proffered the ordinary salute which fashion so inconsistently permitted among the polite, considering the otherwise ceremonious manners of that formal day. They each seemed labouring under a continual exertion to maintain the tone in which Greyslaer had so happily commenced their correspondence, and which had hitherto been successfully kept up between them. But the restraint which either felt at heart must soon have convinced them that they mutually stood in a false position toward each other.

A famous modern sayer of apothegms tells us that friendship may sometimes warm into love, but love can subside into friendship never ; and an ancient one goes still farther by making hatred the only change of which love is capable. As indifference will often supervene to the most violent passion, the creed of the last is manifestly absurd ; but there is something of truth in the proverb of the former ; for though the sentiment of friendship, a feeling of the warmest and kindest regard, may indeed exist where love has once been, yet the calm rela-

tion of friends, with all its easy and pleasurable frankness of intercourse, can hardly grow up between two parties where love has once been the source of interest to either, and that love has been once avowed. There must be some lurking mortification, if not some secret trace of sorrow, on one side or the other ; a jealousy of mutual respect, a quickness to take offence, and, above all, the mournful memory of former passages, endeared only in recollection, perhaps, by their being associated with the halcyon season of youth and hope, but still endeared to it ; there must be this memory to come over the spirit amid its gayest sallies, and make the society of the one who has elicited them, saddening, if not oppressive, to the mind for the moment.

What wonder, then, if Greyslaer's visits to the Hawksnest were gradually intermitted. A character so earnest as his cannot always find material for conversation amid themes of passing interest, while one that fills his whole soul is utterly forbidden ; for conversation with her, moreover, whose presence unlocks the secret chambers of his mind, and peoples it with thoughts that may not walk abroad.

He had promised Alida never officiously to thrust himself farther into her confidence ; and he remembered his promise, but the forced durance she had suffered at the hands of Bradshawe was known to him, and he burned to resolve his suspicions concerning that dark and desperate man. He had hoped, in his earlier visits, that their discourse might some time lead to Alida's reposing that full confidence in him which he persuaded himself was somehow due to the truthfulness and steadfastness of his attachment, under the changed form in which he was determined she should view it. But the moment did not come ; and upon each succeeding visit

Greyslaer seemed farther from the hope of such a revelation than ever. Alida, in fact, did not dream of making it.

Whether it was that she did not consider Greyslaer her young friend the most proper party to interest himself about her affairs ; whether she paled at the peril to which Greyslaer her lover would be exposed by the steps he might adopt upon receiving the disclosure ; whether she shrunk, with true female delicacy, from the farther agitation of a subject so painful, or whether she had proudly determined to be herself the arbiter of her own destiny, it is impossible to say. But while there are some circumstances which diminish the force of the last supposition—such as the present banishment of Bradshawe from this region, and the change which seems to have come over the character of Alida after she came to realize the full extent of her family bereavements—it is probable that all these considerations swayed her by turns, and suggested the reserve of conduct which was the result.

And now Captain Greyslaer has become noted alike among his equals in rank and his superior officers for his rigid and exclusive attention to his military duties. He seldom goes beyond the limits of the post where he is stationed. His visits to the Hawksnest, which is only a few miles off, seem gradually to have ceased altogether ; and a book or newspaper from New-York, with some pencilled remarks upon the news it contains from the seat of war, is, when transmitted through his orderly, the only intercourse he holds with its inmates.

Alida—though other officers of the garrison sought by assiduous attention to supply the place of Greyslaer—Alida, it must be confessed, began soon to miss his accustomed visits. The superior mental accomplishments of Greyslaer, the student would

with her have given him but slight advantage over his military comrades ; but the character of Greyslaer the soldier, of Greyslaer the young partisan, whose wild adventures and perilous escapes among the Indians was the theme of every tongue, appealed more forcibly to the romantic admiration of Alida ; and, apart from all tender associations of the past, regarding him only in the light of an acquaintance of the day, she would have felt an interest in the society of Max that no other of his sex whom she had hitherto known could inspire.

There might possibly, too, be something in the altered aspect of Greyslaer which more or less affected the light in which a woman's eye would regard him, now that his cheek had lost its freshness from hardship and exposure ; and that almost boyish air which characterized his appearance even in early manhood, had been changed by more recent habits of action, of command, and of self-reliance.

The mother who, welcoming her long-absent son, sighs as she looks vainly in his features for those gentler traits which graced the handsome stripling with whom she parted, smiles the next moment with inward pride at the sentiment of newly-awakened respect with which she is somehow mysteriously inspired toward her own offspring : she startles at the altered modulations of his voice as heard at a distance : she wonders at the changed cadence of his footfalls, as his approaching step, which was ever music to her ear, grows nearer : she marks his graver and more even mien : she gazes upon the brow where manhood has already stamped its lordly impress ; yet, even while leaning for counsel upon him who so lately looked to her for care, can scarcely realize the swift and silent change that is now so fully wrought.

So had it been with Alida. Greyslaer was to her
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as a boy no more ; and if her own feelings had not taught her thus, the conviction must have been forced upon her, by the light in which, as she saw, he was regarded by those far older than herself. His opinions upon all subjects seemed to be quoted by those who were his immediate associates ; and she heard continually of grave cases in which Greyslaer's judgment was appealed to by members of the Committee of Safety, and others charged with the various clashing powers of the provisional government of the period. The friendship of such a man she felt was to be valued, and she even acknowledged to herself that, had not circumstances placed an insurmountable barrier between them, Greyslaer—judging him only by the character he had formed for himself in the world—Max Greyslaer was the man of all others to whom her proud and aspiring heart would have been rendered up.

But, alas ! what bootéd such knowledge now ? Of what avail was it that reason reluctantly at last sanctioned the preference which a secret tenderness suggested, when reason was wholly at war with the indulgence of these partial feelings. Reason, though she sustained with the one hand the judgment which guided that partiality, pointed sternly with the other to an abyss of hopelessness. Alida might love Greyslaer, but she never could be his.

With minds of a gentler mould, or even with one lofty as hers, if attempered by the sweet influences of Religion, a quiet and uncomplaining resignation would have been the alternative of one thus weighed down by the hand of fate. But Alida, though her fervid soul was in a high degree characterized by that sentiment of natural piety which, existing in almost every highly-gifted mind, is so often mistaken for the deeper and more permanent principle which alone deserves the name of true reli-

gion—Alida had never yet known that sober, solemn, and holy conserving influence by whose aid alone, the preacher tells us, we may possess our minds in peace. She rebelled against the lot to which she seemed doomed as a disappointed, if not broken-hearted woman. She would struggle against the blind pressure of circumstance, and war till the last with the fate which only served to exasperate while it overshadowed her spirit.

It is strange how, while most minds grow haughty, exacting, and imperious from success, misfortune, so far from bringing humility with it, produces precisely the same effect in others; they seem to harden in the struggle with sorrow, and grow insolent as they gain knowledge of their own powers of endurance.

"I'll go no more," said Greyslaer one evening, as, throwing himself dejectedly into the saddle, he passed through the gate which opened upon the grounds of the Hawksnest, and turned his horse's head toward the garrison; "I'll go no more. Had her reception been merely cold and formal after the long interval I have ceased visiting her, I should not have complained of such notice of my neglect; for *she*, perhaps, never suspects the cause that keeps me away. But those two fingers so carelessly accorded to my grasp, with that light laugh as she turned round in speaking to that group of idlers, even in the moment that I was expressing my pleasure at seeing her—pshaw! there are no sympathies between that woman and myself; there never was, there never can be any;" and he struck the rowels into his horse almost fiercely, as, thus bitterly musing, one angry thought after another chased through his mind.

"And what if she is?" he exclaimed, reining up suddenly again to a slower pace. "What if she is

wayward, fretful, and exacting to me alone of all other men? Forgetful of the devoted and all-absorbing love I have borne her ; forgetful of the feelings which, save on that terrible night only, I have always kept trained in obedience to what I deemed her happiness. *She* never attempted to inspire this misplaced and mistaken interest ; she never lured me on to the avowal ; she never trifled with the emotions that prompted it. What right have I to arraign her conduct, to sit in judgment upon her manner toward me ? Her character is the same that I have ever known it. Her manner toward *me* ? Am I, then, such an egotist that that is to change my estimation of *her* ? She does not love me, she cannot love me ; and if she did, is there not this hideous bar between us ? What care I, then, for the show of interest, when the reality can never be indulged ? No ! my part is taken—irretrievably taken, and I would not recall my choice. For me there is no fragment of happiness that I can save from the wreck of the past, but I will still drift with her wheresoever the sea of events may hurl us.”

It is well for us that it is only in very early life that we are thus prodigal of our chances of happiness, and willing to concentrate them all upon a single issue. Alas ! how soon do we learn, in maturer years, to shift our interest from scheme to scheme ; to see wave after wave, upon which the bark of our hopes has been upborne, sink from beneath it, until the very one upon which it was about to float at last triumphantly, strands us upon the returnless shores of the grave !

But, though many a worldling has commenced his experience of life with views hardly less romantic than those of Max Greyslaer, *his* was not the mere wayward devotedness of youth to its first sorrow. The very constitution of his mind was of a loyal,

venerating kind ; (for, deeply imbued as he was, by the classic culture of his mind, with that ancient, intellectual spirit of republicanism which had at once determined his political position in the present civil struggle, Greyslaer, under another system of education, would probably have turned out almost a bigoted royalist;) and the sentiment which still attached him to Alida was nearly akin to that which, in another age and under other circumstances, would have inspired his self-devotion to some dethroned and expatriated prince, like him for whom one of his immediate ancestors had suffered upon the scaffold. Had he never declared his passion for Alida, he might have succeeded in crushing it ; he would certainly have attempted to reason it away the moment that he discovered that he must love in vain ; but, the avowal once made, he never dreamed of withdrawing the adhesion he had thus given in, much less of transferring his affections to another. He had made an error of choice ; a most unhappy, a most cruel one ; but still he would abide by that choice, whatever consequences might accrue. The part which Max Greyslaer had thus chosen would, in a rational point of view, become only an ill-regulated, almost, we might say, a half-besotted mind. Yet the weakness of choosing such a part is precisely that which has dwarfed the growth and distorted the otherwise noble proportions of minds naturally the most masculine and commanding.

But the feelings and reflections of Greyslaer, upon which we have dwelt, perhaps, somewhat too minutely, received a new direction at this moment, as he heard the clatter of a horse's hoofs rapidly approaching in an opposite course to that which he was travelling. The speed of the coming horseman seemed to announce that he was either fleeing

from pursuit, or riding upon some errand of the utmost urgency ; and, ere Greyslaer could make out the figure of the strange rider amid the darkness, his conjectures as to his character were cut short by an occurrence which may best be told in another chapter.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE DISCOVERY.

"*Calous*. What kind, indulgent power
Has smiled on Calous, that so much bliss
At once should dissipate his darkest gloom,
And make a noon of midnight !

"*Athenia*. His ways are dark and deeply intricate—
When Heaven was kindest, innocence was lost,
And Paradise gave birth to misery."

Athenia of Damascus.

THERE was a blacksmith's shop at the forks of the road, a few yards in advance of the spot where Greyslaer, the moment he became aware of the stranger's approach, had reined up to challenge him in passing. For, in these times, when almost every passenger upon the highway was an object of scrutiny, a horseman who journeyed so hotly by night naturally awakened suspicion as to his character.

Max, remembering the neighbourhood of the blacksmith's hovel, thought for a moment that it might be only some farmer's boy, who, directing his way thither to have a horseshoe replaced, was endeavouring by speed to diminish the lateness of the hour in which he must return homeward when his errand was finished. But the toils of the blacksmith seemed already ended for the day, as the sound of his anvil had ceased, and no light hovered around his shanty to tell that the bellows was busy within. The horseman, too, did not check his speed as he approached the smithy, but came thundering on as before, evidently about to pass it. As it chanced, however, the owner of the premises

was still there at work around his smouldering fire ; and in the very moment that the stranger passed the large unglazed window of the hovel, a sudden puff of his bellows sent the sparks up from the chimney of the forge, and threw a ruddy strip of light across the road. The horse of the stranger, startled at the sudden glare, shied, and flung his rider upon the spot.

Greyslaer, who clearly beheld the adventure from where he stood, spurred forward, threw himself from the saddle, and assisted the blacksmith, who had rushed to his door, in raising the fallen man from the ground. The smith, who was none other than the doughty Wentz, mentioned in the earlier chapters of this work, uttered a significant cry of surprise the moment he beheld the features of the dismounted traveller ; and Max, upon scrutinizing them more narrowly as they together dragged their helpless load to the light, was at no loss to recognise the savage apparition of the Haunted Rock in the bruised, bedraggled, and crestfallen being before him.

“ You may look for the master where you find the man,” said Flans, shaking his head wisely as he dipped a handful of dirty water from the trough in which he generally cooled his irons, and threw it in the face of the stunned and senseless man.

“ His master ?” interrogated Greyslaer, a dark chain of suspicious and vengeful thoughts forming in his mind with the rapidity of lightning.

“ Well, his leader then—his employer, or whatever name you would give him who has always used this chap in his doings when he had work on hand. He, I say, Wat Bradshawe, must be astir when Red Wolfert rides abroad after this fashion. It were a mercy, now, to the whole country, captain, to knock him in the head with this iron.”

"What! murder a man that lies helpless before you? Surely, Hans, your heart is not harder than the flinty road which has just spared the wretch's life. Lay those pistols out of his reach, however, and this knife too; he must not handle it on reviving," said Max, as the weapons caught his eye while loosing Valtmeyer's girdle to enable him to breathe more freely.

"Thousand devils! where am I?" muttered the brigand, opening his eyes, and quickly closing them again, as if the glare from the forge offended his sight.

"In safe hands enough, Wolfert," answered the blacksmith, as Greyslaer silently motioned him to reply.

"Aha! whose voice is that?" cried the ruffian, rubbing his bloodshot eyes, but not yet raising his head, as he rolled them from side to side. "Hans Blacksmith, was it you that spoke, good Hans? Thousand devils! where's my mare?"

"Far enough by this time, I guess, from the round rate in which she scoured down the south fork. Are you hurt much?"

"Um..... Has Greyslaer, the rebel captain, passed along here yet to-night?"

"Why do you ask?"

"Because we mustn't let him go by, that's all."

"We! Why, you're drunk, Wolfert. Do you think I will aid you in stopping passengers on the People's highway?"

Valtmeyer answered only by raising himself upon the bench whereon he had been laid; but he moved so stiffly and slowly that Greyslaer had time to withdraw a few steps within the deep shadows of the place.

"Drunk, you say, um....." and the desperado fumbled around his waist for the arms he generally

wore there. "Donder und blixem! who in the name of h—ll has removed my arms?"

"Your belt must have burst a buckle when you were thrown," replied Hans, calmly.

Valtmeyer fixed a penetrating gaze upon his countenance; but the immobility of the blacksmith's features taught him nothing. He raised himself to his feet with a slight groan, paused, and passed his hands down his sides, as if to feel whether or not his ribs were broken; and then, without saying a word, moved toward the single tallow candle which, stuck into a gourd, stood on the anvil near by.

"I can't spare my only candle; if it's your arms you want to look for," said Hans, stepping forward, "the night air will flare it all away. Nobody will touch your belt where it lies atween now and to-morrow morning."

The outlaw, glowering upon him, muttered something inaudible in reply; and, without heeding the behest of Hans, seized upon the candle. The first movement he made in lifting it threw the light full upon Greyslaer. Valtmeyer, in his surprise, let the gourd fall from his hands, and the taper it held was instantly extinguished in the black dust beneath his feet. There was now barely light enough from the forge to distinguish the outlines of his person where he stood, and, by plunging instantly into the surrounding darkness, he might at once have escaped. But, uttering the cry of "Treachery" in the moment he let the candle fall, he snatched from the furnace a red-hot iron—a crowbar, as it seemed from its size—and, swinging it double-handed about his head, made for the door.

The entrance to the hovel lay in deep shadow, but his glowing weapon betrayed his position as he dashed from one side to the other to find the means of exit. Hans struck at him repeatedly with a cold

iron which he had caught up at the first onset ; but Valtmeyer, at one moment whirling his terrible truncheon like a flail about his ears, and launching it forward like a harpoon the next, not only warded off the attack, but in one of his thrusts fairly bore Hans to the ground ; while the leathern apron of the blacksmith, shrivelling up at the contact, alone prevented the red-hot iron from passing through his body.

As Hans stumbled over a billet of wood in falling, Valtmeyer might yet have followed up his advantage ; but Greyslaer, who, with drawn sword, had planted himself in the doorway to prevent his escape in the first instance, now rushed forward and dealt a blow which would have smitten any common man to the earth, and even the brawny Valtmeyer went down on one knee beneath it. A single thrust with the rapier's point would here have terminated his career ; but Max, seeing him drop the crowbar as if his right arm had been paralyzed from his shoulder, was thrown off his guard by Valtmeyer's apparently defenceless condition, and in another instant the active ruffian was beyond the reach of his sword.

There was a long, low, open window, such as are usual in a blacksmith's shanty, near where Valtmeyer fell, and the sill of which he had grasped with his left hand in falling. Through this he flung himself, unharmed by the pistol-shot with which Greyslaer almost simultaneously accompanied his sudden movement.

Max leaped instantly after him in pursuit ; but, as the fugitive became invisible in the surrounding darkness, he turned to secure his horse, of which the outlaw might otherwise make prize. Hans appeared the next moment with a light. They traced Valtmeyer by the blood from his sword-cut for a

few yards only. The dust of the road was spotted with it, but the dew lay heavy upon the grass which bordered it, and there were thickets opposite, into which he must instantly have plunged after crossing the highway.

Valtmeyer's belt for holding his arms, to which his bullet-pouch was still attached, was the first thing that caught Greyslaer's eye as he re-entered the cabin. The weapons he handed over to Hans, who seemed better contented with the issue of the night's adventure as he scrutinized his share of the spoils with a workman-like eye. But the seams of the girdle enclosed matters far more interesting to Max than the ammunition with which the pouch was stored. There were letters from some of the leading Tories in Albany, who, as is now well known, maintained throughout the war a secret correspondence, which the sagacious Schuyler, in order to avail himself of the intelligence from Canada thus procured, wisely permitted to go forward so long as he could successfully counterplot with these subtle traitors. These papers were, of course, to be forwarded at once to the Committee of Safety at Albany. But there were also letters relating to private matters which awakened a deeper personal interest in Greyslaer, and whose contents he did not feel called upon himself to communicate, save to the parties immediately interested. One of them was from the famous Joe Bettys to Bradshawe himself; and the heart of Greyslaer thrilled within him as he read the following passage :

"Wolfert will do all that is necessary among our friends in the Valley. The business on hand in this district will not allow us both to leave it. The best rallying-point is somewhere among the Scotch clearings north of the Mohawk. The Cave of Waneonda, you may depend upon it, will never do ;

and that for more reasons than one. Your revival of that c—d D. R. affair must have made it more or less notorious. How the devil did that wench slip through your fingers? Valtmeyer has explained the matter to me a dozen times, but I cannot understand it. Zounds! I would like to make an honest woman of that mettlesome huzzy myself. But your claim must ever prevent her becoming Mistress Joe Bettys. By-the-way, Wat, did she ever suspect who played the parson's part in the beginning of that wild business? The jade must some day know how much she is beholden to me; but the secret, I need hardly tell you, is safe until the endorsement of a genuine black-coat shall make all things secure. Had you been the man I took you for, the girl would have gone on her knees to ask for it before you ever let her escape from Waneonda. But to return," &c.

Greyslaer could read no farther. The characters swam before his eyes; his senses became dizzied; and, were it not for the support of the workbench against which he leaned, he must have fallen to the ground. It was but for an instant, however, that he was thus unmanned, and it were impossible to say what feeling predominated in the conflicting emotions which for that first moment overwhelmed him; though a wild joy, an eager and confident hope prompted his next movement, as, calling in an agitated voice for his horse, he waited not for Hans to pass out of the door, but, brushing almost rudely past him, threw himself into the saddle, and galloped off in the direction of the Hawksnest.

The astounded smith stood listening for a few moments to his horse's footfalls as they rapidly died away in the distance, shook his head, and touched his forehead significantly, as if he feared that all were not right with his young friend; then slowly

withdrawing into his shop, he shot the bolt behind him, extinguished the fires, and, taking up the outlaw's belt, which he paused to examine again for a moment, passed through a side wicket into a log cabin which adjoined the shed, and constituted his humble dwelling.

Greyslaer, before reaching the Hawksnest, was challenged by the party of his friends whom he met returning from their evening visit, and whose approach, though the young officers rode gayly along, talking and laughing with each other, he did not notice till he was in the midst of them. A few hurried words, suggesting on their part that he must have forgotten something of importance, and implying upon his that he would overtake them before they reached the garrison, was all that passed between them as he brushed impatiently by.

The family had all retired when he reached the homestead ; but a light still burned in Alida's apartments. He threw his rein over the paling, and, after trying the outer door in vain, stepped back from the verandah, and looked to the only window through which the light appeared. The curtain was drawn, but a shadow, which ever and anon fell across it, showed that the inmate of the chamber had not yet sought her repose. It was with Alida alone that he must secure an interview ; and Max, in the agitation of his spirits, did not hesitate at the first means which presented themselves. There was on that side of the house a porch, with a balcony over it, having a single window cut down to the floor. This window opened into Alida's dressing-room, which communicated with her bedchamber. Greyslaer clambered to the top of the balcony, and tapped against the panes of glass in the moment that the light was extinguished.

"Fear not," he said, "it is I, Max Greyslaer. I

come with tidings of such import to you that I could not sleep before possessing you of them."

Alida, hastily throwing a loose wrapper around her person, opened the casement. "Heavens! Captain Greyslaer," she exclaimed, "what urgent peril can have—my brother Derrick, it is not of him—"

"No, no, no peril—nothing of Derrick—undo the door below—it is of you—it is your concerns alone which have brought me here at this untimely hour."

"Is the matter, then, so pressing? Can we not wait till morning?" said Alida, in strange agitation.

"I cannot trust it till the morrow. It cannot sleep, I must not move from near you, till you hear it."

"Speak it out at once, then, Max, for my poor nerves will not bear this suspense," said Alida, with increasing tremour of voice.

"I cannot speak it all; I must have light to reveal it by. See here this written paper, Alida."

"And what does it say?" she replied, with forced calmness. "Tell me, Max Greyslaer; if it be good or evil, I had rather receive it from your lips than from any other source."

"Heaven bless you for those words. My tidings are far from evil, yet I scarce know how to break them to you. There was a bird—do you remember it, Alida, one day in years gone by?—a bird that we watched together as it sat crouched upon the lowest bough of yonder chestnut, while a hawk long hovered mid the topmost branches; it seemed withering in the shadow of those ill-omened wings. A chance shot from Derrick at a distance frightened the falcon from his perch of vantage; but the besieged songster also fell to the ground at sound of the report which drove his enemy from his stooping-place, and seemed like to perish, when you

caught up the little trembler and cherished him in your bosom."

"Oh! Max, what mean these wild words, spoken at such a time?" said Alida; for this fanciful allusion seemed so unsuited to the earnest purposes of the moment, and was so unlike the wonted manly directness of Greyslaer's mind, that, coupled with his agitated manner and the other strange circumstances of the interview, Alida was shocked for the moment with the apprehension that his brain might be disordered.

"Nay, but they are not unmeaning, if you will but interpret them, Alida! Have *you* not sat thus beneath the withering wing of sorrow? Have you not been ruthlessly hawked at, and made the prey of villany the most hideous? And has not chance, or God's own Providence call it rather, brought the hour of relief which is come even now?"

"Is *he* dead, then?" whispered Alida, clasping her hands, as a light seemed to break in upon her from Greyslaer's words.

"Dead? ay!—no, not that; but he is to you as if he never lived. They deceived you, Alida; the supposed ties which so manacled your soul had never yet an existence; it was a false marriage, a fiendlike and most damnable contrivance to destroy you. Look not so doubtful and bewildered. I have the written evidence of what I say! Alida, dearest Alida, speak—speak and tell me that you doubt not. It is I, Max Greyslaer, who always loved, and never yet deceived you; it is I—"

But Alida was mute and motionless. Her tottering knees had failed to support her, though she clung to the dressing-table near which she stood for support. Greyslaer quickly passed through the window, and, catching her fainting form from the floor, bore her out to the balcony. Supporting her

there on one knee, he anxiously chafed her pulses, while the refreshing breeze of night, playing through the long tresses which drooped over her shoulders, aided in reviving his lovely burden.

The moon, which was in its last quarter, at this moment cast above the trees the golden light she loves to shed in waning. The mellow beam caught the opening eyes of Alida, and a tear—the first Max had ever seen her shed—trembled upon their lids as she turned from that soft harbinger of happier days to the soulful face of her lover. The impulse is resistless which makes Greyslaer, in that moment, snatch her to his bosom. “Yes, dearest Max, I *will* be yours:” are not those the words she murmurs in reply to his caress?

She paused; and in that pause there was an Elysian moment for them both. But in another instant Alida extricates herself from his embrace; and though she suffers him still to retain her hand, her voice is yet somehow painfully constrained and altered as she speaks what follows.

“Ah! Greyslaer, I fear me this flood of happiness has come in too quickly to last for either of us. That paper may be—nay, look not thus hurt—I doubt not that it contains sufficient to produce entire conviction in your mind as well as mine; for, had it not been for the deep reliance I place upon your judgment, Max—a judgment so far beyond your years—I should never have betrayed the feelings you have beheld this night. But, whatever be the fate of the regard I bear you, Greyslaer, you have won it, and it is yours. No, never would I recall this hour.” Max mutely pressed her hand to his lips, and she went on. “But it is a strange and dark story of which we have now the threads in our hands, and I shudder with the fear that, deeming too quickly we have unravelled it all, there may be

others interwoven with it not so easy to disentangle. My name must be cleared, not only to your satisfaction, Greyslaer, but to that of all who have ever heard its sound, before I will change it for yours; and in these troubled times it is long before I can hope for such a result."

"Your name, Alida! None have ever, none dare ever, connect that with dishonour. Your name! Why, this terrible secret has been so kept from the world, that I never dreamed of mystery attending you till you yourself revealed that there was one."

"Yes, in the class with which we have most mingled, my story is but little known; but there must be many of the country people of a different grade, though worthy of respect as those who sometimes pretend to engross it all, who cannot but have heard of it; and I would not have the simplest rustic cherish a memory that can do irreverence to the wife of Greyslaer. Let us wait, dearest Max; wait till time—till chance, which has already done so much for me, shall determine still farther. Till then, affianced to you in soul Alida will still remain; and, whate'er betide, she will never be another's."

Greyslaer, who knew too well the character of Alida to remonstrate against her purpose when settled, determined at least to defer whatever he had to urge against her resolution until a more propitious season. Besides, with a lover's thoughtful consideration, he feared that the night air might blow too chilly upon the loosely-arrayed person of Alida to render it safe to protract the interview. They parted—not with the fond and caressing adieux of newer and happier lovers, but when the hand which Greyslaer was loath to release trembled in his pressure as he bade farewell, he stooped to print a single kiss upon the pale cheek which was not withdrawn from him.

And now, good steed, thou bearest a different man upon thy back from him who has thrice already guided thee over the same road to-night. The stern and disappointed man that, with firm hand and even rein, bent his twilight course hither : the moody and abstracted lover that loitered homeward at a fitful pace : the wild-riding horseman, who spurred ahead, as if each moment were of importance to solve the riddle he had already read—were not each and all of these a different being from the buoyant cavalier who now, with ringing bridle, gallops gayly over hill and dale, leaning forward now to pat thy glossy neck and speak cheering words of encouragement, and now rising in the stirrup as if his happy spirit vaulted upward at each gallant bound beneath him ? Surely there is a music in the good horse's motions which times itself ever to our mood, whate'er the changes be.

Alas ! many were the changes of mood that Greyslaer was yet doomed to know ere the story of his strange love was ended. But of the delay that sickens hope, the doubts that wither it ; of the chilling thoughts, the shadowy fears of the future, he dreamed not, cared not now, more than he did for the clouds which crept over the skies and obscured the path before him. His mind was filled with but one idea, which excluded all others. He knew—what once to know or once to believe, in that first hour of belief or knowledge, makes all the world a Paradise around—*He knew that he was BELOVED.*

Shall we pause to paint the next interview between Max and Alida—when the happy lover won from her lips the final words of her full betrothal to him ? Shall we describe those which followed, when Max, with arguments she did not wish to answer, convinced her that there was now no real bar to their wedded happiness, and she yielded up all

thought of seeking redress for her wrongs, save through him who was shortly to become the rightful guardian of her honour ; to the friend who had already become dearer to her than her life ? Shall we tell how the softening influence of love gradually melted the Amazonian spirit of her earlier day, until the romantic dream of retribution, which had so sternly strung the soul of the once haughty Alida, became lost at last in the loving woman's tender fears lest Bradshawe, now so far removed from the vengeance of her lover, should yet cross his path ? Shall we dwell upon the transports of feeling which agitated the soul of Max, now burning with impatience to exact such retribution, and now absorbed in a wild confusion of delight as the day approached which would make Alida his for ever ?

Or shall we rather describe his chafing vexation and her mute forebodings when the call of military honour, abruptly summoning him away to distant and dangerous duty, deferred that blessed expectation of their union to a period which the fearful chances of civil war only could determine ?

Shall we follow the patriot soldier in his bright career of achievement, as, courted and caressed by the glowing eyes and chivalrous spirits of the South, he measures his sword with the boldest of his country's invaders, or mingles with few superiors in council among the noblest of his country's defenders ? Shall we survey him in that broader field of action, where the indulgence of personal animosity and schemes of vengeance against a mere adventurer like Bradshawe are forgotten and swallowed up in the more general and nobler interests that press upon him ; but where the image of Alida is still as dear to his mind as when last he waved a reluctant adieu to his native valley ?

But no, young Max, it is not for us to track the

meteor windings of thy soldierly career amid those thrilling scenes which *Lee*, *Sumter*, *Pickens*, *Marion*, and *Tarleton* their gallant foe, have since immortalized in guerilla story, and made the heritage of other names than thine. The record of thy exploits is fully chronicled, mayhap, in one true heart only, and that grows daily sadder as it counts the hours of thy absence and dreams of the friend who is far away.

The first of these is the fact that the United States is a young nation, and its history is therefore a history of growth and development. The second is the fact that the United States is a large nation, and its history is therefore a history of expansion and conquest. The third is the fact that the United States is a diverse nation, and its history is therefore a history of conflict and compromise.

The fourth is the fact that the United States is a nation of immigrants, and its history is therefore a history of assimilation and integration.

The fifth is the fact that the United States is a nation of pioneers, and its history is therefore a history of exploration and discovery.

The sixth is the fact that the United States is a nation of inventors, and its history is therefore a history of innovation and progress.

The seventh is the fact that the United States is a nation of reformers, and its history is therefore a history of change and improvement.

The eighth is the fact that the United States is a nation of idealists, and its history is therefore a history of hope and aspiration.

The ninth is the fact that the United States is a nation of dreamers, and its history is therefore a history of vision and ambition.

The tenth is the fact that the United States is a nation of achievers, and its history is therefore a history of success and accomplishment.

The eleventh is the fact that the United States is a nation of leaders, and its history is therefore a history of guidance and direction.

The twelfth is the fact that the United States is a nation of followers, and its history is therefore a history of obedience and loyalty.

The thirteenth is the fact that the United States is a nation of rebels, and its history is therefore a history of defiance and resistance.

The fourteenth is the fact that the United States is a nation of revolutionaries, and its history is therefore a history of upheaval and change.

The fifteenth is the fact that the United States is a nation of visionaries, and its history is therefore a history of foresight and planning.

The sixteenth is the fact that the United States is a nation of idealists, and its history is therefore a history of hope and aspiration.

The seventeenth is the fact that the United States is a nation of dreamers, and its history is therefore a history of vision and ambition.

The eighteenth is the fact that the United States is a nation of achievers, and its history is therefore a history of success and accomplishment.

The nineteenth is the fact that the United States is a nation of leaders, and its history is therefore a history of guidance and direction.

The twentieth is the fact that the United States is a nation of followers, and its history is therefore a history of obedience and loyalty.

The twenty-first is the fact that the United States is a nation of rebels, and its history is therefore a history of defiance and resistance.

The twenty-second is the fact that the United States is a nation of revolutionaries, and its history is therefore a history of upheaval and change.

The twenty-third is the fact that the United States is a nation of visionaries, and its history is therefore a history of foresight and planning.

The twenty-fourth is the fact that the United States is a nation of idealists, and its history is therefore a history of hope and aspiration.

The twenty-fifth is the fact that the United States is a nation of dreamers, and its history is therefore a history of vision and ambition.

The twenty-sixth is the fact that the United States is a nation of achievers, and its history is therefore a history of success and accomplishment.

The twenty-seventh is the fact that the United States is a nation of leaders, and its history is therefore a history of guidance and direction.

The twenty-eighth is the fact that the United States is a nation of followers, and its history is therefore a history of obedience and loyalty.

The twenty-ninth is the fact that the United States is a nation of rebels, and its history is therefore a history of defiance and resistance.

The thirtieth is the fact that the United States is a nation of revolutionaries, and its history is therefore a history of upheaval and change.

The thirty-first is the fact that the United States is a nation of visionaries, and its history is therefore a history of foresight and planning.

The thirty-second is the fact that the United States is a nation of idealists, and its history is therefore a history of hope and aspiration.

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The thirty-ninth is the fact that the United States is a nation of visionaries, and its history is therefore a history of foresight and planning.

BOOK THIRD.

INVASION AND RETRIBUTION.

"Thus come the English with full power upon us;
And more than carefully it us concerns
To answer royally in our defences,
To line and new-repair our towns of war;
For England his approaches makes as fierce
As waters to the sucking of a gulf."

Henry V.

"On the stage
Of my mortality my youth hath acted
Some scenes of vanity, drawn out at length
By varied pleasures, sweeten'd in the mixture,
But tragical in issue."

The Broken Heart.

"Thus to rob a lady
Of her good name is an infectious sin
Not to be pardoned. Be it false as hell,
'Twill never be redeemed if it be sown
Among the people, fruitful to increase
All evils they shall hear."

Love lies a-bleeding.

"Prosper me now, my fate—some better genius
Than such as waits on troubled passions
Direct my courses to a noble issue.

* * * * I am punished

In mine own hopes by her unlucky fortunes."

FORD.

BOOK THIRD

THE HISTORY OF THE REFORMATION

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GREYSLAER;

A ROMANCE OF THE MOHAWK.

BOOK THIRD.

CHAPTER I.

RANGERS' REVELS.

"Round with the ringing glass once more,
Friends of my youth and of my heart,
No magic can this hour restore;
Then crown it ere we part.

"Ye are my friends, my chosen ones,
Whose blood would flow with fervour true
For me; and free as this wine runs,
Would mine, by Heaven! for you."

HAMILTON BOGART.

A YEAR has passed away—the second year of the Revolution—and Greyslaer is not nearer the fruition of his hopes than in the hour when they first dawned anew upon his soul. The calls of military duty have, in the mean time, carried him far from his native valley, to which, with a sword whose temper has been tried on many a Southern field, he is now returning; for New-York at this moment needs all her children to defend her soil. Burgoyne upon the Hudson, and St. Leger along the Mohawk, are marching to unite their forces in the heart of the province, and sweep the country from the lakes to the seaboard.

VOL. II.—I

The ascendancy which, upon the first outbreak of hostilities, the Whigs of Tryon county attained over the opposite faction, seemed, at this period of the great struggle, about to be wrenched from their hands. The conspiring bands of Tories which had been driven out or disarmed when Schuyler marched upon Johnstown and crushed the first rising of the royalists, had lifted the royal standard anew upon the border, and rumours of the thousands who were flocking to it struck dismay into the patriot councils. Brant and his Mohawks had always kept the field in guerilla warfare, and the frontiersmen were habituated to the terror of his name ; but now Guy Johnson, who had been stirring up the more remote tribes, was said to have thickened his files with a cloud of savage warriors. The combined Indian and refugee forces had rendezvoused at Oswego thoroughly armed and appointed for an efficient campaign ; and Barry St. Leger, who took command of the whole, boasted confidently that he would effect a conjunction with Burgoyne, if that leader could make good his march upon Albany.

Availing himself of the numerous streams and lakes of the country to transport his artillery and heavy munitions, St. Leger advanced with forced marches from the wilds of the North and the West, and, penetrating into the Valley of the Mohawk, invested Fort Stanwix, the portal of the whole region beyond to the Hudson. The province far and wide was alarmed at this bold and hitherto successful invasion ; and some of the sturdiest patriots of Tryon county stood aghast at the incoming torrent which threatened to overwhelm them. But the anxiety of the mass was more akin to the alarm that arouses than to the terror which paralyzes action. There is a spirit abroad among the people ; a spirit of determined resolve, of vengeful hatred against those

who have come back to desolate the land with fire and sword. Sir John Johnson, who stands high in the councils of the invading general, has approached the threshold of his fortified patrimony; but the arrogant though brave baronet, should he penetrate as far as the broad domain over which his family once exercised an almost princely sway, will find that strange changes have taken place among his rustic and once humble neighbours.

The march of armies, the pomp and parade of martial times, with many of the dark incidents of civil feud shadowing the pageantry of regular warfare, have been beheld in the Valley of the Mohawk, and the lapse of a short two years has markedly altered the character of the district in which the principal scenes of our story are laid. The inhabitants are no longer gathered together in village or hamlet to reason calmly about their rights, and pass formal resolutions upon the conduct of their rulers. The reckless assertion, the hot and hasty reply, the careless laugh or fierce oath which cuts short the laggard argument, show that men's tempers have altered, and the times of debate have long since given way to those of action. The soldier has taken the place of the civilian; the military muster supplanted the political assemblage; and the plain yeomanry of a rural district are no longer recognisable in the gay military groups that seem to have usurped their place at the roadside inn. Now, especially, when the proclamation of the commandant of the district has summoned every male inhabitant capable of bearing arms to the field, the highways are filled with yeomanry corps, battalions of infantry, volunteers from the villages, and squadrons of mounted rangers from the remote settlements, all urging their way to the general rendezvous at Fort Dayton.

Hitherward, too, occasionally, intermingled with these raw levies, were likewise marching bodies of experienced partisan troops, which, as the scene of war shifted from one part of the northern frontier to another, had kept the field from the first. Armed and trained to serve as either cavalry or infantry, the "Mohawk Yægers," as they called themselves, were found acting now as videttes and foraging parties for the Congressional forces; fighting now by themselves with the Indians in guerilla conflict, and now again co-operating with the Continental army in regular warfare. The public-house of Nicholas Wingear, which lay immediately upon the road to Fort Dayton, was at this time a favourite stopping-place of refreshment with the different corps which composed this motley army, and a small command had halted there for the night at the time we resume the thread of our story.

The old stone-built inn, with its ruined sheds and outhouses of half-hewn logs, which used to stand somewhere about midway upon the road between Canajoharie and German Flats, has probably long since given place to some more modern hostelry. Mine ancient host, too, the worthy Deacon Wingear—unless the flavour of his liquor lives in the memory of some octogenarian toper—is perhaps likewise forgotten. It is not less our duty, however, to chronicle his name here while opening this act of our drama beneath the hospitable roof of Nicholas.

The apartment in which the ranger corps were carousing was large and rudely furnished, containing only—besides the permanent fixture of a bar for the sale of liquors, which was partitioned off under the staircase at one end of the room—a small cherry-wood table and a few rush-bottomed chairs as its customary moveables. Temporary arrangements seemed, however, to have been lately made

for a greater number of guests than those would accommodate. An oaken settle had been brought from its place in the porch, and arranged, with several hastily-constructed benches, around a rude substitute for a dining-table, formed by nailing a pair of shutters upon a stout log placed upright upon the floor; the convenience being eked out in length by some unplanned boards resting upon an empty cask or two.

The rudeness of this primitive banqueting furniture could hardly be said to be smoothed away by a soiled and crumpled tablecloth which scantily concealed less than half of its upper surface. It appeared, however, to answer the purpose with the bluff campaigners who were now seated around it, filling beaker after beaker from a huge pewter flagon which rapidly circulated around the board. Nor did they, while making the most of these ungainly appliances for their comfort, envy the burly and selfish loungeur who occupied and monopolized two or three of the chairs, as well as the smaller and neater table in one corner of the apartment. Of this privileged and loutish individual we shall speak hereafter. A heavy black patch covered one of his eyes; but the curious glances which he with the other ever and anon casts upon the carousing soldiery would intimate that they are worthy of a more minute description than we have yet given of them.

Their stacked arms and knapsacks flung carelessly in the corners might indicate that they are only some fatigue party of militia that has stopped here for refreshment; or it may be a detachment from some larger body of light troops which has halted for the night upon their march through the country. The absence of all military etiquette, and the free and equal tone of their intercourse, as they sit all drinking at the same board, would imply that

they are only privates of some volunteer company of foot. And yet, if his sabre and spurs were wanting, there is still that in the appearance as well as the equipments of more than one of their number which would anywhere distinguish him from the common soldier of a marching regiment, much less from an ordinary militia-man. His looks are too intelligent for those of a mere human machine, accustomed only to act in mechanical unison with others. His features are earnest, but not rigid. His air is martial, but yet not strictly military. It betrays the schooling of service rather than the habit of discipline. It bespeaks the soldier, who has been made such by circumstance rather than by the drill sergeant. In a word, it is the air of a guerrilla, and not of a regular.

But listen; the partisan grows musical in his cups. There is a grave pause in his wild wassail; he has linked hands with his comrades; and now, with one voice, they raise their battle hymn together. It is that half-German gathering song which, in the days of the Revolution, used to stir the Teuton blood of "The old Residenters," as the men of the Mohawk called themselves.

OUR COUNTRY'S CALL.

1.

Raise the heart, raise the hand,
Swear ye for the glorious cause,
Swear by Nature's holy laws
To defend your fatherland!
By the glory ye inherit,
By the deeds that patriots dare,
By your country's freedom, swear it:
By the Eternal, this day swear!
Raise the heart, raise the hand,
Fling abroad the starry banner,
Ever live our country's honour,
Ever bloom our native land.

2.

Raise the heart, raise the hand,
Let the earth and heaven hear it,
While the sacred oath we swear it,
Swear to uphold our fatherland !
Wave, thou ensign glorious,
Floating foremost in the field ;
While thine eagle hovers o'er us
None shall tremble, none shall yield
Raise the heart, raise the hand,
Fling abroad the starry banner,
Ever live our country's honour,
Ever bloom our native land.

3.

Raise the heart, raise the hand,
Raise it to the Father spirit,
To the Lord of Heaven rear it,
Let the soul tow'rd Him expand !
Truth unwavering, faith unshaken,
Sway each action, word, and will :
That which man hath undertaken,
Heaven can alone fulfil.
Raise the heart, raise the hand,
Fling abroad the starry banner,
Ever live our country's honour,
Ever bloom our native land.

The solitary loungee, who sat aloof from the soldiers, exhibited every sign of boorish impatience short of being directly offensive, as each new verse followed the repetition of the chorus from the other table. He was a strong-featured, bull-necked fellow, whose slouched drab beaver, huge loaded whip, and blanket-cloth overcoat indicated the occupation of a teamster or drover. A pipe and pot of beer had been placed before him while the soldiers were in the midst of their song, with whose soothing luxury he seemed not fully content, however, judging by the growling impatience with which, ever and anon, he now asked about some toasted cheese that it appeared was preparing for him in the kitchen. His

remarks were addressed to mine host, a thin-faced, lank-haired worthy, in a complete suit of black velvet, who stood behind the bar with slate in hand, ready to make any addition to his reckoning at the first call for replenishing the jorum of the soldiers ; and partly to a tight lass that glided to and fro through the room, on the alert to receive the orders of the company.

"Why, Tavy, gal," said the drover, "I shall have drank up all my ale before that cheese is forthcoming. Your mammy ought to be able to toss up such a trifle at five minutes' notice. I must ride far to-night, and that right soon, to overtake my cattle, which must be driven to Fort Dayton before breakfast to-morrow. And here one moment—I would tell you something, my pretty Tavy."

"Octavia, Sarah Ann," cried a shrewish female voice from the kitchen.

"Go, Tavy, my good girl, to your mother," said mine host, evidently uneasy to get the girl out of the way of the cheese customer. "Your call shall be obeyed in a moment, worthy sir ; only have a little patience. We are anything but strong-handed in this house just now. My son Zachariah went off with the Congress soldiers yesterday, and Scotch Angus stole away to join the king's people last week. The niggers are all sorting the horses that came in to-night, and my good woman has no one to split a stick for her till Zip comes in from the stable."

"Well, Bully Nick, you might have spared all that long palaver if you had left spry-tongued Tavy to tell me the same thing in three words, instead of squinting and blinking to her to clear out, as you did just now. Hark ye, Nicholas, I would say a word to you ;" and the man, whose lawless features put on a scowl, as if some angry thought had struck him, beckoned to the innkeeper to approach near

enough for them to exchange a whisper together. But this mark of confidence Wingear seemed sedulously to avoid; and the traveller, at last rising abruptly from his seat, strode up to the bar, and, flinging down his reckoning, stalked out of the apartment; not, however, before he had leaned over the counter, and, catching the shrinking Nicholas by the collar of his coat, muttered in his ear,

"I see you know me, worthy Nick! and, seeing that you do, I've half a mind to slit your weasand for fighting so shy of an old acquaintance. *Schin-nos!* breathe but a syllable to this rebel gang, and I'll roast you and your household among those rotten timbers before morning. Remember! I have an eye upon you, even among that batch of fools yonder."

"I say, deacon," cried one of the Yægers, as the innkeeper, stooping down behind the bar, as if busied in arranging something, managed thus to conceal the terror which this formidable speech had inspired, "I say, deacon, my boy, who the devil's that surly chap who's just left us?"

"That's more than I can tell you, Captain De Roos," replied Wingear, with difficulty mastering the trepidation into which he had been thrown, and still averting his face as he plied his towel industriously along the shelves over which he leaned. "The man's in the cattle business, I believe, sir, as he talked of driving some critturs to Fort Dayton for the troops there."

The officer paused for a moment in mere idleness of thought, as it seemed from the intentness with which he watched the smoke-wreaths from his mouth curling upward toward the rafters; and then knocking the ashes from his segar, he resumed abruptly, before replacing it in his lips,

"Did you ever see anything of Wolfert Valtmeyer in these parts, Nicky?"

"Oh yes, sir," answered Octavia, who that moment entered with a fresh flagon from the cellar; "he stopped here about harvest time two years ago with Mr. Bradshawe, just as the troubles were beginning. They went off in a hurry; folks said because old Balt the hunter came down here to look after their doings."

"You are mistaken, Tavy," said her father, uneasily; "Bradshawe and the drover—and Valtmeyer I mean—put down the pitcher, gal, and don't stand gaping at me so. The drover and Brad—I mean Wolfert—"

"You mean! and what the devil do you mean?" said the soldier, turning round fiercely, and fixing a stern eye upon the innkeeper. "Keep a straight tongue between your teeth, Nick, or you may wish it bitten off when too late."

The abashed publican, quailing beneath the penetrating glance of De Roos, was glad of any excuse for remaining silent, while the other, addressing the girl, thus pursued his inquiries:

"And so, my pretty Tavy, you saw Valtmeyer about two years since, eh? About the time of Greyslaer's fight, wasn't it?"

"Yes, sir, either just before or just after Brant carried off Miss Alida."

The features of the gay soldier darkened as she spoke; but, quickly resuming his air of unconcern, he continued his questions by asking,

"What kind of a looking fellow was Wolfert then? Did he bear any resemblance to the drover that was here but now?"

"He was about as tall as the drover, sir, but not so fleshy. When the drover had his back turned I almost mistrusted it was Mr. Valtmeyer; but then

the drover was much younger and rounder-faced, and, in spite of the black patch over his eye, altogether more likely looking than Mr. Valtmeyer, who looked mighty homely with his great sprangly beard, he did ;” and the girl smoothed down her apron, and cast a glance over her shoulder at a bit of looking-glass stuck against a post of the bar, as if she questioned the taste of the unshorn Wolfert in having, by his toilet, shown such indifference to her charms.

“He was thinner, and wore a long beard, eh ? a razor and good quarters would easily make all the difference,” soliloquized De Roos. “But the impudent scoundrel would scarcely dare thus to put his head in the lion’s mouth. Yet I must have an eye to the puritanical curmudgeon that this simple lass has the courtesy to call father.” And then resuming aloud, he added, “Did your father ever know—”

“Octavia Sarah Ann,” interrupted the shrill voice from the kitchen.

“Curse the beldam !” muttered De Roos, as the nuisance was instantly repeated.

“Octavia Sarah Ann, come take this toasted cheese to the cattle merchant.”

“Yes, mother, yes, I’m coming ! Had you any more questions to ask me, captain ?”

“Go, gal, go,” growled old Wingear, in a low voice. “You are too fond, young missus, of keeping here among the sogers.”

“Any more questions ? no—stay one moment, sweet Tavy, my blooming Tavy. Where got you those gay ribands which lace that bodice so charmingly ?”

“Law, sir,” replied the girl, bashfully retiring a step or two as the gallant soldier stretched out his hand as if to draw her near and examine the trim of her tasteful little figure more curiously ; “law, sir, it’s only the blue and buff, the Congress colours,

you know, that old Balt brought me, with other fixings, from Schenectady."

"Octavia Sarah Ann, if ye're not here in the peeling of an inion, 'twill be the worse for you," screamed the virago mother.

"You see, captain, I *must* go."

"Zounds ! what a tight ankle the girl has, too," quoth the captain, as she tripped out of the apartment. "And so that queer quiz, old Balt, has induced her to mount the patriot colours ! Well, I hope a finer riband will not induce her to change them for the blue and silver of 'The Royal New-Yorkers,' as Johnson's motley gang call themselves. For 'Bold and true, in buff and blue, &c. ;'" and the mercurial ranger strolled off to the stables, humming some verses of an old song, which was quickly taken up and echoed by his comrades.

Oh bold and true,
In buff and blue,
Is the soldier-lad that will fight for you.
In fort or field,
Untaught to yield
Though Death may close his story—
In charge or storm,
'Tis woman's form
That marshals him to glory.
For bold and true,
In buff and blue,
Is the soldier-lad that will fight for you.

In each fair fold
His eyes behold
When his country's flag waves o'er him—
In each rosy stripe,
Like her lip so ripe,
His girl is still before him.
For bold and true,
In buff and blue,
Is the soldier-lad that will fight for you.

"There he goes—God bless him—singing for all the world like a Bob-a-linkum on the wing—a crit-

tur whose very natur it is not to keep still for a moment, and to make music wherever he moves."

"And what mare's nest has our singing bird found now, corporal?"

"Well, I don't know, sargeant; only, if the captain has got upon the trail of Wild Wolfert, as his words belikened, it would be a tall thing for us boys to seize that limb o' Satan, and carry him along with us to German Flats."

"Ay, ay, it would indeed; but though our scouts would make us believe that both he and Bradshawe are snooping about the country among the Tories, I rather guess that they are both snug in St. Leger's lines before Fort Stanwix."

"No doubt, no doubt," said a trooper, rapping an empty flagon with the hilt of his sabre, as if tired of the discussion of so dry a subject. "Butler could never spare such an officer as Bradshawe at such a time as this."

"Yes," rejoined another; "and if he were really skulking about among the Tories, the hawk-eyed Willett must have lighted upon him while screwing his way through such a ticklish region to come down and alarm the lower country as he did."

"Come, lieutenant," cried one who had not yet spoken, "give us another song; and be it a merry or droll one, if it suits you; this is the last night we are to mess together like gentlemen volunteers. To-morrow we shall be mustered with the old Continentals, and then the cursed etiquette of army discipline puts an end to all fun among us. It takes Captain Dirk a whole campaign to thaw out into a clever fellow after passing a week with his company in the regular lines; and as for you, Tom Wiley, who've sat the whole evening—"

"Spare me, worthy Hans; I hate to find myself under the command of a Congress officer as much

as you do, only you know that, for the honour of the corps, we Yægers should keep up the observances of military rank when acting with the government forces."

"That's a fact, boys," said the corporal. "What! would you have our free companies confounded with the common-draughted milishy, and laughed at by all the Continentals as *they* be? No, no; I may wince as much as any on ye when I feel the screws o' discipline first beginning to set tight, but I like to see our captain take airs upon himself with the best on 'em when it's for the honour of the corps. There now's the Refugee partisans that fight on their own hook just like ourselves—Johnson's Greens and Butler's Rangers, Tories though they be—toe the mark like real sodgers upon a call of duty. Oh, you should have been in Greyslaer's company to see discipline, and that, too, jist when the war was breaking out; only ask Cornet Kit Lansingh, when the poor boy comes safe to hand again from that wild tramp of hisn! As sure as my name's Adam Miller, if Major Max ever comes back from the South—"

"It will be to haunt you, Adam, for prosing about these gloomy byergones instead of drinking your liquor. Major Greyslaer has been dead these six months, and his ghost ought to be laid by this time. As for poor Cornet Kit, the only service we can render him is to drink his memory all standing."

"Don't tell me that," said the corporal, his face reddening with indignation. "You can't riley me about the major, Tom Wiley; for, though folks would make out that he fell at Fort Moultrie, I knows what I knows about *him*! As for Kit Lansingh, you needn't waste liquor by drinking to his memory yet a while; for hasn't old Balt got scent of him clean off in the Genesee country? and aint

he upon his living trail by this time with the friendly Mohegan that I myself heerd tell about having seen Kit with his own eyes among the Oneidas last winter?"

"What, Balt try to carry his scalp safely through the Seneca nation, not to mention the Onondagoes and Cayugas, through all of which he'll have to run the gauntlet before reaching the Genesee? Pshaw, man, the old hunter is as cold as my spurs long before this."

Though the reckless trooper spoke thus only for the sake of teasing his comrade, yet the partisan corporal was familiar enough with the dangers of the wilderness not to fear that what Wiley said was true. But, as if to shake off the ungrateful conviction, he emptied his beaker at a draught, shook his head, and was silent, while another of the Yægers changed the subject by saying,

"Well, well, let's have Wiley's song. Come, Wiley, if it must be the last time we have a bout of free and equal fellowship like this together, just tune up something we can all join in."

The vocalist began to clear his throat, filled a bumper, threw himself back in his chair, and had got more than half through the usual preliminaries with which most pretenders to connoisseurship chill and deaden the impulsive flow of festive feeling (in instantaneous sympathy with which their song should burst forth if they mean to sing at all), when he was suddenly superseded in his vocation.

"Tavy, my light lass! Tavy, my border blossom!" cried the gay voice of De Roos without; and then, as entering the room from one door, while the girl peeped shyly in from the other, "Come hither—hither, my flowering graft of a thorny crab; come hither, my peeping fawn, and learn news of the kind old forester who has always played the godfather to

you. They have succeeded, boys. Kit Lansingh lives and thrives. Here's a messenger from Fort Dayton, bringing the news from Balt himself, now at that post. Carry on, carry on, and tell us your tidings ; but hold, the poor fellow's athirst, perhaps. Wash the dust from his mouth with a cup of apple-jack, Adam, and then he'll speak."

The countryman, who, entering the room at the heels of De Roos, had cast a wistful eye upon the table from the first, advanced without saying a word, and tossed off the liquor which the corporal filled out for him, smacked his lips, wiped his mouth with his coat-sleeve, and thus delivered himself :

"All I have to say, gentlemen, is nothing more or less than what I was telling the capting here when he broke away from me like mad at the stable-door ; where, who should I first happen upon but the capting when I went to put up my pony, before looking round for him here. 'Is there anything astir among the people?' says the capting, says he, when I delivered him that note from Colonel Weston which he holds in his hand, and which, if I don't make too bold, is an order—"

"Yes, yes, an order for me to move forward to-night. Carry on, man, carry on with your story," cried the impatient De Roos.

"Well, as I was saying, 'Is there anything astir?' says the capting, says he. 'Why, to be sure there is,' says I ; 'and a mighty pretty stir it is, too,' says I. 'Hasn't old Balt got back from his wild tramp, and doesn't he bring the best of news for us in times as ticklish as these? I guess he does, though,' says I. 'There's the young chief Teondetha and a white man he rescued from the Cayugas, and took home among his people for safety, are coming down to help the country, with three hundred Oneida rifles at their backs,' says I ; 'and didn't they send Balt

a short cut ahead to warn our people not to move upon Fort Stanwix until they could have time to crawl safely round the enemy and join old Herkimer at the German Flats? 'To be sure they did,' says I; and then the capting what does he do but, instead of hearing me out, he ups at once and asks me the name of the white man as furiously as if it was for dear life he spoke; and when I told him it was Mr. Christian Lansingh, the likely young nephew of old Balt, he tore away from me as if I had the plague; and I—I ups and follows at once to see the end of his doings; and there, now, gentlemen, you have the hull history o' the matter, so I'll jist put another drop o' liquor in this glass and drink sarvice to all on ye, not forgetting that right snug young woman, whose colour has been coming and going like all natur while I told my story—meaning no offence whatever, miss."

"Offence to Tavy, my lad! no one suspects you of that. There are mettlesome chaps enough here to take care of her," said a soldier.

"Ay," echoed another, "she has a brother in every man in the troop."

"And she shall choose a husband among the best of ye, when the wars are over," cried De Roos. "But carry on, men, carry on; we must sound for the saddle in twenty minutes; and, unless you would leave your liquor undrunk, carry on, carry on."

"Ay, ay, fill round for our last toast," said the sergeant, rising; "*war and woman*—wassail we've had enough of to-night—*war and woman*—the myrtle and steel."

"The myrtle and steel," echoed a dozen voices. "Your song, your song now, Wiley."

"War and woman—the myrtle and steel," shouted De Roos; and then, before the twice-foiled lieutenant could collect his wits for the occasion, the

spirit of the wild partisan broke forth in the song with which we close this record of the rangers' revels.

1.

One bumper yet, gallants, at parting,
 One toast ere we arm for the fight ;
 Fill around, each to her he loves dearest—
 'Tis the last he may pledge her ! to-night.
 Think of those who of old at the banquet
 Did their weapons in garlands conceal,
 The patriot heroes who hallowed
 The entwining of Myrtle and Steel !
 Then hey for the Myrtle and Steel,
 Then ho for the Myrtle and Steel,
 Let every true blade that e'er loved a fair maid,
 Fill around to the Myrtle and Steel.

2.

'Tis in moments like this, when each bosom
 With its highest-toned feeling is warm,
 Like the music that's said from the ocean
 To rise ere the gathering storm,
 That her image around us should hover,
 Whose name, though our lips ne'er reveal,
 We may breathe mid the foam of a bumper,
 As we drink to the Myrtle and Steel.
 Then hey for the Myrtle and Steel,
 Then ho for the Myrtle and Steel,
 Let every true blade that e'er loved a fair maid,
 Fill around to the Myrtle and Steel.

3.

Now mount, for our bugle is ringing
 To marshal the host for the fray,
 Where proudly our banner is flinging
 Its folds o'er the battle array :
 Yet gallants—one moment—remember,
 When your sabres the death-blow would deal,
 That MERCY wears *her* shape who's cherished
 By lads of the Myrtle and Steel.
 Then hey for the Myrtle and Steel,
 Then ho for the Myrtle and Steel,
 Let every true blade that e'er loved a fair maid,
 Fill around to the Myrtle and Steel.

CHAPTER II.

THE SOLDIER'S RETURN.

"Home of our childhood ! how affection clings
And hovers round thee with her seraph wings !
Dearer thy hills, though clad in autumn brown,
Than fairest summits which the cedars crown ;
Oh happy he, whose early love unchanged,
Hopes undissolved, and friendship unestranged,
Tired of his wanderings, still can deign to see
Love, hopes, and friendship centring all in thee."

HOLMES.

It was a summer's evening, when Max Greyslaer, returning, after a long absence, to his native valley, left his tired horse at the adjacent hamlet, and hurried off on foot to present himself at the Hawksnest. The sun of a fiercer climate, not less than the unhealthy swamps of the South, had stolen the freshness from his cheek ; and the arduous campaign in which he had lately signalized himself, had left more than one impress of its perils upon his manly front. But the heart of the young soldier was not less buoyant within him because conscious that the comeliness of youth had passed away from his scarred and sallow features. He had learned, before reaching its neighbourhood, that the beloved inmate of the homestead was well ; and, breathing again the health-laden airs of his native north, he felt an elasticity of feeling and motion such as he had not known in many a long month before. The stern realities of life which he had beheld, not less than the active duties in which he had shared, had long since changed Max Greyslaer from a dreaming student into a practical-minded, energetic man ; but his whole moral temperament must have been al-

tered completely, if the scene which now lay around, and the circumstances under which he beheld it, had not called back some of the thoughtful musings of earlier days.

The atmosphere, while slowly fading into the gray of evening, was still rich in that golden hue which dyes our harvest landscape. The twilight shadows lay broad and still upon the river which glided tranquilly between its overhanging thickets ; but, while those on the farther side were purpled with the light of evening, the warm hues of lingering sunset still played upon the canopy of wild vines which imbowered those that were nearer, touching here and there the top of a tall elm with a still ruddier glow, and bathing the stubble-field on some distant hill in a flood of yellow light. But, lovely and peaceful as seemed the scene, there was something of sadness in the deep silence which hung over it. The whistle of the ploughboy, the shout of the herdsman, the voices of home-returning boors loitering by the roadside to chat for a moment together when their harvest-day's work was over—none of these rustic sounds were there. The near approach of invasion had summoned the defenders of the soil away from their native fields, and the region around was almost denuded of its male inhabitants ; infirm age or tender youth alone remaining around the hearths they were too feeble to protect. The deep bay of a house-dog was the first thing that reminded Greyslaer that some sentinels at least were not wanting to watch over their masterless homesteads.

The young officer, fresh from the animated turmoil of a camp-life, had ridden all day along highways bustling with the march of yeomanry corps, crowding into the main route from a hundred farm-roads and by-paths, all hastening toward the border,

and the air of desertion in the present scene could not but strike him by the contrast. It was with a heart less light and a step less free than they were an hour before that he now wended his way among the shrubbery in approaching the door of the Hawks-nest. The sound of music came from an open window in the wing which was nearest to him, and his heart thrilled in recognition of the voice of the singer as he paused to listen to a mournful air which was singularly in unison with his feelings at the moment. The words, which were Greyslaer's own, had, indeed, no allusion to his own story, but they had been thrown off in one of those melancholy moods when the imprisoned spirit of sadness will borrow any guise from fancy to steal out from the heart; and coming from the lips they did, they were now not less apposite to the passing tone of his mind than in the moment they were written.

1.

We parted in sadness, but spoke not of parting;
We talked not of hopes that we both must resign,
I saw not her eyes, and but one teardrop stealing
Fell down on her hand as it trembled in mine:
Each felt that the past we could never recover,
Each felt that the future no hope could restore,
She shuddered at wringing the heart of her lover,
I dared not to say I must meet her no more.

2.

Long years have gone by, and the springtime smiles ever,
As o'er our young loves it first smiled in their birth.
Long years have gone by, yet that parting, oh! never
Can it be forgotten by either on earth.
The note of each wild-bird that carols toward heaven,
Must tell her of swift-winged hopes that were mine,
And the dew that steals over each blossom at even,
Tells me of the teardrop that wept their decline.

The song had ceased, but Greyslaer, before it finished, had approached near enough to hear the sigh

with which it ended ; for how much of the past did not that single sigh repay him, even if his long account of affection had not been already balanced by the true heart that breathed it ! In another moment Alida is folded to his bosom.

* * * * *

“ My own Alida was hard to win, but most truly does she wear. Do I not know who was in your thoughts, beloved, in the moment that my rustling footsteps made you rush to the verandah to greet me ?”

“ I heard not your footsteps, I *felt* your presence, dearest Max ; yet was I strangely sad in the instant before you came.”

“ And I, too, Alida, was sad, I scarce know why, save from that mysterious sympathy of soul with soul you have almost taught me to believe in. But now—”

“ Now I know there should be no place for gloom ; yet why, Max, should melancholy thoughts in the heart of either herald a moment of so much joy to both ?”

Max, who had often playfully philosophized with her upon the tinge of superstition with which the highly imaginative mind of Alida was imbued, now attempted to smile away her apprehensive forebodings. But as she knew, in anticipation, that he was on his way to the seat of war, and could only have snatched this brief interview in passing to the post of peril, the task of cheering her spirits was a difficult one.

“ Not,” said she, rising and pacing the room, while her tall figure and noble air seemed to gather a still more queenly expression from the feelings which agitated her, “ not that I would have the idle fears of a weak woman dwell one moment among your cares—for your mind, Max, must be free even

of the thought of me when you go where men are matched in war or counsel against each other—but something whispers that this meeting, that this parting is—is what your own words, which I sung but now, may in spirit be prophetic of.”

“Nay, nay, Alida,” said Max, smiling, “that foolish song has already more than answered its purpose in serving to while away a lonely moment of yours, and I protest against my rhymes being perverted to such dismal uses. You may change your true knight into a faithful troubadour or humble minstrel of your household, if you will; but I protest against your making him play the musty part of old ‘Thomas the Rhymer,’ merely because he has once or twice offended by stringing verses together.”

“Why will you always jest so when I feel gravest?” said Alida, half reproachfully, as she placed her hand in that which gently drew her back to the seat which she had left by Greyslaer’s side.

“It is gravity of mood, and not of thought, dearest, that I would fain banter away; for surely my Alida would not call these vain and idle fancies *thoughts*? Why should I deal daintily with things so troublous of her peace? Out upon them all, I say. The future has no cloud for us, save that which will continue to hover over thousands till peace return to the land; why should we study to appropriate more than our proper share of the general gloom? As for this Barry St. Leger,” said Max, with increasing animation, “St. Leger is a clever fellow to have pushed his brigand crew thus far into the country; but gallant Gansevoort still holds him stoutly at bay, and if Hermiker and his militia fail to bring him to a successful account, we have fiery Arnold and his Continentals already on the march to beat up his quarters and drive the Tories back to Canada.”

As the young soldier spoke, Alida caught a momentary confidence not less from the tone of his voice than from the look of his eye. The proud affection with which she now gazed upon the manly mien of her lover seemed more akin to her natural character than did the anxiety of feeling which again resumed its influence in her bosom ; an anxiety which continually, throughout the evening, sent a shade of sadness to her features, and which Greyslaer, remembering in long months afterward, had but too much reason to think proceeded from one of those unaccountable presentiments of approaching evil which all have at some time known.

Since the memorable night when Greyslaer's providential discovery of the real position in which Alida stood toward Bradshawe had won from her the first avowal of her regard, this painful subject had been rarely alluded to by either ; nor, closely as it mingled with the story of their loves, will it seem strange that a matter so delicate should be avoided by both in an interview like the present.

The joy of their first meeting had banished it alike from the hearts of either ; and Alida, as the painful moment of parting grew nigh, could not bring herself to add to present sorrows by recalling those which seemed all but passed away entirely, though their memory still existed as a latent cause of disquiet to herself. As for Max, his spirits seemed to have imbibed so much vigour and elasticity from the stirring life he had lately led, that it was almost impossible for Alida not to catch a share of the confidence which animated him. But though the state of the times and the duties which called Greyslaer to the field, and which might still for a long period defer their union, seemed, as they conversed together, the only difficulties that obstructed their mutual path to happiness, there was in the heart of Alida

a vague apprehension of impediments yet undreamed of and far less easy to be surmounted.

The moments of their brief converse were sweet, deliciously sweet to either; but the banquet of feeling was to Alida like the maiden's feast of the Iroquois legend. Her bosom was the haunted lodge, where ever and anon a dim phantom flitted around the board, and withered, with his shadow, the fruits and flowers which graced it.

In the mean time there was one little circumstance, which, calling up a degree of thoughtfulness, if not of pain, in the mind of Greyslaer, would alone have impaired the full luxury of the present hour. Some household concerns had called Alida for a few minutes from the room in which they were sitting, and Max, to amuse himself in her absence, turned over a portfolio of her drawings which chanced to be lying upon a table near. The sketches were chiefly landscape views of the neighbouring scenery of the Mohawk, which is so rich in subjects for the pencil; but there were several studies of the head of a child interspersed among the rest, which, after the recurrence of the same features sketched again and again with more or less freedom and lightness, finally arrested the earnest gaze of Max as he viewed them at last in a finished drawing, which was evidently intended for a portrait. He felt certain that he had seen the face of that young boy before, yet when or where it was impossible for him to remember. There was an Indian cast in the physiognomy, which for a moment made him conceive that it must have been during his captivity among the Mohawks that he had seen the child. Yet, though a close observer of faces, he could recall no such head among the bright-eyed urchins he had often seen at play around his wigwam.

"I am puzzling myself, Alida," said he, as Miss
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De Roos returned to the room, "to remember where it is that I have seen the original of this portrait; for certain it is, the style of the features, if not the whole head, is perfectly familiar to me;" and Max, shading the picture partly with his hand, looked up for a moment as Alida approached him while speaking. "Good heavens!" he added, in a tone of surprise, "how much it resembles yourself as the light now falls on your countenance."

"Do you think so?" cried Alida; "that is certainly very odd, for I have always thought that poor little Guise bore a wonderful resemblance to my brother Derrick, notwithstanding his straight black Indian locks are so different from Dirk's bright curls. Your remark confirms the truth of the likeness I discovered between them; for Derrick and I, you know, were always thought to resemble each other."

"And who, if I may ask," rejoined Greyslaer, gravely, "is this 'poor little Guise,' who is so familiar a subject of interest to you?"

"Oh! I should have told you before of our little protégé, but my thoughts have been so hurried to-night," replied Alida, blushing. "You must know, then, that Derrick takes a vast interest in this forlorn little captive, who is neither more nor less than a grandson of Joseph Brant, that was left behind in an Indian foray when Derrick's band had driven back or dispersed his natural protectors."

"What, a child like that accompany an expedition of warriors across the border! a child of Isaac Brant, too; for he, I believe, is the only married son of the chief! Who gave you this account, Alida?"

"Dear Max, you look grave as well as incredulous. I tell you only what Derrick imparted to me when he brought that friendless boy hither, and begged me to assume the charge of him for a

short season. I conjured my brother to return him to his people, but he would not hear of it. He only answered that, as the boy was an orphan whose mother had perished in the fray in which her child was taken, and whose father was off fighting on another part of the frontier, it was a mercy to keep him here. I saw Derrick for scarcely an hour at the time he made the request. He came galloping across the lawn with the child on the pommel of his saddle before him; scarcely entered the house, except to exchange a joke or two with the old servants who crowded around him; took Guise with him to the stable to look at the horses, and then hurried off to join his troop, which, he said, had made a brief halt while passing through the country toward Lake George."

"And has he given you no farther particulars since?"

"Not a word. He has written once or twice, inquiring how I liked his dusky pet, as he calls him; but he says not a word of his ultimate intentions in regard to him. It was only the other day that, in marching through from the Upper Hudson toward Fort Stanwix, he paid me a visit; but he stopped only to breakfast, and came as suddenly and disappeared almost as quickly as before; and though he caressed and fondled the child while here, yet, when I attempted to hold some sober talk with him about his charge, he only ran on in his old rattling manner, and said there was time enough to think of this when the St. Leger business was over."

"Can I see the child?" said Greyslaer, with difficulty suppressing an exclamation of impatience at the levity of his friend.

"He sleeps now, dear Max. He has been ill to-day, and when I left the room it was only to see

whether or not the restlessness of my little patient had subsided into slumber."

"Does this picture bear a close resemblance to his features?" rejoined Max, taking up the drawing once more from the table.

"I cannot say that; yet I have tried so often, for my amusement, to take them, that I ought at least to have partially succeeded in my last effort. The wild, winning little creature is so incessantly in motion, though, that a far more skilful hand than mine might be foiled in the undertaking. But, Max, if you really feel such a curiosity about my charge, I must show him to you; wait but an instant till I return."

Alida, taking one of the lights from the table as she glided out of the room, reappeared with it, a moment afterward, in her hand. "Tread lightly now," she said, "while following me, for he still sleeps most sweetly, and I would not have him disturbed for the world."

Greyslaer, who seemed to be actuated by some more serious motive than mere curiosity for holding this inquisition over the sleeping urchin, followed her steps without speaking. Alida, entering the dressing-room—into which, as the reader may remember, the eyes of her lover had once before penetrated—made a quick step or two in advance, and closed the door leading into the chamber beyond; then turning round, she pointed to a little cot-bedstead, which seemed to have been temporarily placed there for greater convenience in attending upon her patient.

Max took the candle from her hand, and, shading the eyes of the infant sleeper with his broad-leaved beaver, bent over, as if in close scrutiny of its placid features; while Alida, touched by the sympathizing interest which her lover displayed in her

charge, and dreaming not of the cause which prompted that interest, gazed on with a countenance beaming with sensibility. At first the deep sleep in which the child was plunged left nothing but the lovely air of infantile repose in its expression ; but—whether from being stirred inwardly by dreams, or disturbed by the light which penetrated its fringed lids from without, or touched, perhaps, by the drooping plume with which the soldier shaded its brow—it soon began to move, to gripe the coverlet in its tiny fingers, and, turning over petulantly even in its slumbers, to work its features into something more of meaning.

It was a child of the most tender years ; but, though scarcely four summers could have passed over its innocent head, the lineaments of another, less pure than it, were strongly characterized in its face. Something there was of Alida there, but far more of her wild and almost lawless brother. There seemed, indeed, what might be called a strong family resemblance to them both ; but while the darker hue of Alida's hair might have aided in first recalling her image to him who gazed upon the sable locks of the Indian child, yet her noble brow was wanting beneath them ; and the mouth, which earliest shows the natural temper, and which most nearly expresses the habitual passions at maturity—the mouth was wholly that of her wayward and reckless brother. The features were so decidedly European, that the tawny skin and the eyes, which were closed from Greyslaer's view, were all he thought that could proclaim an Indian origin for this true scion of the Mohawk chieftain's line, as Derrick had represented him to his sister.

“It is the mysterious instinct of blood, then, as well as the natural promptings of her sex's kindness, which has elicited Alida's sympathy for this

wild offshoot of her house. But she should have a more considerate protector than this giddy brother, who, even in assuming the most sacred responsibility, must needs risk mixing up a sister's name with his own wild doings."

"You do not tell me what you think of my protégé," said Alida, as Greyslaer, musing thus, was silent for a moment or two after they returned to the sitting-room. "I declare your indifference quite piques me. You have no idea of the interest poor forlorn little Guise excited when I took him with me to Albany on my last visit to our family friends there."

Max had it upon his tongue to ask her in reply if she thought that the child bore any resemblance to Isaac Brant, its reputed father, whom Alida must have seen in former years; but, at once remembering how closely that individual was connected with Bradshawe's misdeeds, he stifled the question, and, passing by her last observation as lightly as possible, changed the subject altogether. The whole matter, however, left somehow a disagreeable impression with him, and he was provoked at the importance it assumed in his thoughts, when, after the thrilling emotions of a lover's parting had passed away, it recurred again and again to his mind during his long walk back to the inn where he was to pass the night.

The dawn of the next morning found Greyslaer again upon the road toward Fort Dayton, where a pleasurable meeting with more than one old comrade awaited him, and where a military duty devolved upon him which, slight in character as it at first appeared, was destined, in its fulfilment, to have a most serious bearing upon his own happiness and that of Alida.

CHAPTER III.

THE CONSPIRATORS.

Euphion. It now remains
To scan our desperate purpose. Senators,
Let us receive your views in this emergence ;
Only remember, moments now are hours.
Calous. For me, I hold no commerce with despair.
Your chances of success are multiplied ;
Even now, while they expect your suppliant suit,
Pour out a flood of war upon their camp,
And crush them with its weight. Meanwhile, perhaps,
The imperial forces may fresh succour bring.”—DAWES.

THE reader has perhaps gathered, from the interview between Greyslaer and Alida last described, that the characters of both have undergone no slight change since the period when they were first introduced into our story : that Max, as the successful wooer and the travelled soldier who had seen the world, is now a somewhat different being from the visionary student, the fond-dreaming and willow-wearing lover, whose romantic musings have heretofore, perhaps, called out, at times, a pitying smile from the reader : that Alida, the once haughty empress of his heart, whose pride, though utterly removed from ordinary selfishness, had still a species of self-idolatry as its basis, had been not less affected in her disposition by the softening influences of love and sorrow, and that patient realization of hope-deferred which tameth alike the heart of man or woman. Yet these changes are merely those which time and circumstance will work in all of us, and Max and Alida are still the same in every essential of character.

The change in Greyslaer is one that all men

more or less undergo as the sobering influence of riper years steals over them, and their minds are brought more in contact with the practical things of life; when, having tested their powers in the world of action, the frame of the mind becomes, as it were, more closely knit and sinewy, and seeks objects to grapple with more substantial than the shadowy creations of the ideal world in which erst they dwelt. Now, while the success which had hitherto crowned the early career of Max Greyslaer alike in love and arms, is one of the most active elements in rapidly effecting this change from wild, visionary youth, to dignified, consummate manhood, the emotions and cares of Alida were precisely those which would dash the Amazonian spirit and humble the arrogance of self-sustainment in a proud and beautiful woman, once the petted inmate of a bright and happy home, and intrenched in all the advantages that family and station could confer.

The half-insane idea of righting in person the wrongs which she had received at the hands of Bradshawe, had been long since dispelled by the realization of more irremediable sorrows in the death of her nearest relations; and as her woman's heart awoke for the first time to the graces of woman's tenderness, and her spirit grew more and more feminine as it learned to lean upon another, she even shuddered at remembering the strange fantasy of revenge that was the darling dream of her girlhood. It is true, that in the hour of her betrothal to Greyslaer she had listened with the kindling delight of some stern heroine of romantic story to the deep-breathed vengeance of her lover against the man who had plotted her ruin. But as time wore on, and the fulfilment of the vow grew less probable from the prolonged exile of Bradshawe, which might ultimately result in total banishment from his native

land ; and as Max, who was soon afterward called away by his military duties to a distant region, grew more and more dear to her in absence, she gradually learned to shrink as painfully from the idea of a deadly personal encounter between him and Bradshawe, as she lately had from her own unfeminine dream of vengeance.

Nor had the views of Greyslaer, though affected by different causes from those which swayed Alida, altered less in this respect. Max, though his well-ordered mind was in the main governed by high religious principle, was certainly not in advance of those opinions of his day which held a fairly-fought duel as no very serious offence against Heaven ; and indeed he had betrayed, upon more than one occasion, while serving with the hot-headed spirits of the South, that no scruple of early education interfered to prevent him from calling an offender to account after the most punctilious fashion of the times. But, since he had mingled more among men of the world, he had learned enough of its customs to know that Bradshawe was rather a subject for the punishment of the criminal laws than for the chastisement of a gentleman's sword ; and that, while wiping away an insult with blood was a venial offence according to the fantastic code to which, as a military man, he was now subject, to spill the same blood in cutting off a felon was unofficer-like in deed, as it was unchristian-like in spirit to thirst after it. These sentiments, which his camp associations had gradually, and, almost unknowingly to himself, infused into the young soldier, were more than redeemed from trivial-mindedness by those more extended views of action which, growing up at the same time with them, merged the recollection of personal grievances in the public wrongs, to whose redress his sword was already devoted.

The scenes he was now about revisiting served to recall the distempered counsels of former times ; when, after his betrothal to Alida, he had meditated throwing up his commission, and dogging Bradshawe with the footsteps of an avenger until the death of one of them were wrought ; and when his being ordered unexpectedly upon dangerous duty to a remote district happily interposed the point of honour as a stay to such mad procedure. But these scenes, with their attendant associations, revived no feeling in Max's bosom nearer akin to personal hostility toward Bradshawe than any earnest and honest mind might entertain toward a low-lived and desperate adventurer, whose mischievous career would be shortened with benefit to the community. If, then, either the fortune of war or a higher Providence should seem at any time to single out him as the appointed instrument of Bradshawe's punishment, let it bring no reproach to the chivalrous nature of Greyslaer if he should fulfil his stern office with the methodical coldness of the mere soldier.

The order which Captain De Roos had received to hurry forward with his comrades was prompted by intelligence which had been received at Fort Dayton of a secret movement among the disaffected in the neighbourhood. The rapid advance of Barry St. Leger into the Valley of the Mohawk, together with his formidable investure of Fort Stanwix, while far and wide it called out the valour and activity of the patriots to resist the invasion, was viewed with very opposite feelings by the remains of the royalist party which were still scattered here and there throughout Tryon county. These disaffected families, taught, by the events which followed Schuyler's march upon Johnstown in the earlier days of the war, that their lives were held by rather a precarious tenure, and that both their property and

their personal safety depended upon their abstaining from all political agitation, hesitated long to venture upon any new overt acts of treason.

The Johnsons and their refugee adherents, however, had not, in the mean time, been idle in scattering the proclamations of the British ministry, and attempting, by every means in their power, to keep up an intimate connexion with their political friends who were within the American lines. The Provincial government was fully aware of the existence of these intrigues, which were so daringly set on foot and indefatigably followed up by the Tories; and a military force, consisting of the first New-York regiment and other troops, had at an early day been posted at Fort Dayton on the Mohawk, in order to overawe the loyalists and prevent any sudden rising among them.

So bold a Tory as Walter Bradshawe, however, was not to be paralyzed in his plans by such impediments to their success. His emissary, Valtmeyer, whom we have already recognised under his disguise at the roadside inn, had appeared among his old haunts on the very day that St. Leger sat down before Fort Stanwix; and, by the aid of letters and vouchers both from Bradshawe and his superiors, had successfully busied himself in leaguering the Tories together for sudden and concerted action. But, before openly committing themselves in arms, it was deemed necessary that a meeting should be held at the house of one of their number for the purposes of general consultation.

Within a few miles of Fort Dayton resided a Mr. Schoonmacker, a disaffected gentleman, who, previously to the breaking out of the war, had been in his majesty's commission of the peace. This individual, a man of extensive means and influential connexions, had of late exerted himself effectually

in rekindling the spirits and hopes of his party in the neighbourhood. The address with which he managed his intrigues for a long time preserved him from all suspicion of taking an active part in the affairs of the times, though his political tenets were well known in the country round. Grown rash by long impunity, however, or rather, perhaps, incited by the blustering proclamations with which St. Leger flooded the country to give confidence to the king's friends, Schoonmacker now ventured to commit himself completely by offering his house for the accommodation of the clandestine meeting. His generous zeal was warmly praised by the loyalists, already in arms under St. Leger ; and their commander promised that an officer of the crown should be present at the assemblage to represent his own views, and aid and encourage Schoonmacker's friends in their undertaking. Walter Bradshawe, who was now in command of one of the companies of refugees enrolled with the forces that beleaguered Fort Stanwix, eagerly volunteered upon this perilous agency, stipulating only that a small detachment should accompany him to the place of rendezvous—in order to cut his way back to the besieging army in case the projected rising should prove a failure.

Taking with him a dozen soldiers and the like number of Indians, the Tory captain withdrew from the lines of Fort Stanwix and approached the rendezvous of the conspirators upon the appointed evening. His white followers, though they had been mustered in St. Leger's army as regular soldiers, consisted chiefly of those wild border characters who, throughout the war, seem to have fought indifferently upon either side, as the hope of booty or the dictates of private vengeance prompted them to adopt a part in the quarrel. One of these last,

a man whose powerful frame seemed of yet more gigantic proportions, clad as he was in the loose hunting-shirt of the border, and armed to the teeth with knife and tomahawk, two brace of pistols, and a double-barrelled fusee, presented the appearance of a walking armory as he strode along in earnest conversation with his leader.

"Well, Valtmeyer," said Bradshawe, as they approached their destination, "I do not order you upon this duty, which I think one of my light-armed Indians could perform better, perhaps, than yourself; but, if you choose to reconnoitre the fort while we are engaged in counsel, you have full liberty to do so, only—"

But, before he could add the precautions he was about to utter, Valtmeyer, simply exclaiming "Enough!" turned shortly into an adjacent thicket, where the sound of his footsteps upon the rustling leaves was soon lost to the ear of his officer.

Though the hour was late, yet the party collected at Schoonmacker's were still seated at table when Bradshawe, having stationed his sentries, prepared to join them. The carousing royalists had evidently drunk deep during the evening. The health of "The King" was pledged again and again; and their favourite toast of "Confusion to the Rebels" was floating upon a bumper near each one's lips when Bradshawe entered the apartment.

"You are loud in your mirth, gentlemen," cried the Tory officer, returning their vociferous greeting with some sternness, and impatiently waving from him the glass that was eagerly proffered by more than one of the conspirators. "Do I see all of our friends, Mr. Schoonmacker, or have these loyal gentlemen brought some retainers with them?" added Bradshawe, with more blandness, bowing at the same time politely to three or four of the company,

as he recognised them individually either as influential characters well known in the county, or as old personal acquaintances of his own. "I was told, Major MacDonald," continued he, turning to a noble-looking, gray-headed man of fifty, "I was told that you, at least, could bring some twenty-five or thirty of your friends and dependants to strengthen our battalion of Royal Rangers."

"Twenty-six, sir, is the number of followers which I have promised to add to the royal levies; but, in lending my poor means to aid the cause of the king, I was not aware that my recruits were to be mustered under the command of a stranger; nor did I understand from General St. Leger that we were to serve in the Rangers. There are certain forms, young sir, to be observed in such proceedings as those in which we are engaged; and it may be well for you to produce certain missives, with which you are doubtless furnished, before we proceed directly to business."

Bradshawe—who, by-the-by, was hardly of an age to be addressed as "young sir" without some offence to his dignity—bit his lip while observing the coolness with which the worthy major knocked the ashes from his segar while tranquilly thus delivering himself. He, however, repressed the insolent language which rose to his lips in reply, and, placing his hand in his bosom, contented himself with flinging contemptuously upon the table a bundle of papers which he drew forth, exclaiming, at the same time,

"You will find there my warrant, gentlemen, for busying myself in these matters."

As he spoke he threw himself into a chair and poured out a glass of wine, with whose hue and flavour he tried to occupy his attention for the moment; but he could not conceal that he was somewhat net-

bled by the coolness with which the veteran turned over and examined the documents one after another, passing the captain's commission of Bradshawe, with the other papers, successively to those who sat near him. Bradshawe moved uneasily in his chair as this examination, which seemed to be needlessly minute and protracted, was going forward; and it is impossible to say what might have been the result of so severely testing the patience of his restless and overbearing mind, if the phlegmatic investigation of the worthy major had not been interrupted by a noisy burst of merriment from another part of the house, which instantly called the partisan captain to his feet.

"For God's sake, Mr. Schoonmacker, what means this revelry? Do those sounds come from the rebels, who lie near enough and in sufficient force to crush us in a moment, or is it our own friends who play the conspirator after such a fashion? Who the dev—"

"Your zeal is too violent—pardon me, my worthy friend," interrupted the amiable host. "The revelers you hear are only the good country people whom our friends have brought with them to honour my poor house, and who are making themselves a little merry over a barrel of beer in the kitchen. We could not, you know, Mr. Bradshawe," he added, in an insinuating, deprecatory tone, as the other raised his eyebrows with a look of displeased surprise, "we could not but give them the means of drinking the health of the king, and all are so well armed that we dread no surprise from Colonel Weston."

A shade of chagrin and vexation passed over the haughty features of Bradshawe as he compared in his mind more than one orderly and stern assemblage of the Whigs, to which he had managed to gain access, with the carousing crew with whom

he had now to deal. "The fools, too!" he muttered, "sending my countrymen to drink with their servants! Do they think that is the way to confirm the loyalty of American yeomen?" Then addressing himself to the company with that urbane and candid air which he knew so well how to assume, and by which he had often profited when before a jury in other days, he said, "I was too hasty, gentlemen; but I was afraid, from the noise I heard, that a body of Indians that I have brought with me had somehow got access to liquor; and, to prevent the possibility of so dangerous a circumstance, I think we had better at once call our friends together, and let the proclamation of General St. Leger, with the accompanying letter from Sir John Johnson, both of which lie before you, be read aloud for the benefit of all."

The suggestion, which could not but have weight with all parties, was instantly adopted. A meeting was soon organized by calling Major MacDonald to the chair and appointing Mr. Schoonmacker secretary; and the more humble adherents of the royal cause being summoned from the other parts of the house, the proclamation and letter were duly read by the latter.

The appeal of Sir John to the timid and disaffected inhabitants of Tryon county to follow his example, and, abandoning their present neutral position, take up arms for their lawful sovereign, was received with warm approbation. Nor was there less enthusiasm upon hearing the proclamation from St. Leger read, inviting all true subjects of the king, and all violators of the laws, who hoped pardon for past offences from his majesty's goodness, to come and enroll themselves with his army now before Fort Stanwix. Bradshawe then moved a resolution, beginning with the customary preamble, "At

a meeting of the loyal gentry and yeomanry of Tryon county, convened," &c., and by way of clinching matters while they seemed in such capital train, he mounted a chair and commenced haranguing the assemblage, urging the importance of immediate action in the cause to which every man present had now fully committed himself.

His adroit, and, withal, impassioned eloquence, was addressed chiefly to the common people; and the generous boldness with which he committed his and their property to the chances of a civil war, in which either had but little or nothing to lose, elicited their rapturous admiration; particularly when he set forth, in glowing terms, how much they were to expect from the exhaustless bounty of their sovereign. In the midst of his harangue, however, and while all parties were warmed up to the highest pitch of loyal enthusiasm, he met with an interruption, the cause of which may be best explained by looking back a few pages in our narrative.

CHAPTER IV.

THE SPY.

“ On him did passion fasten, not to roam,
And love and hate alike might find a home ;
And burning, bounding, did their currents flow
From the deep fountain of the heart below.
Many a year had darkly flown
Since passion made that heart its own ;
Fit dwelling for the scorpion
Revenge, to breathe and riot on ;
Fit, while the deep and deadly sting
Of baffled love was festering.”—BROOKS.

THE outlaw Valtmeyer, after parting with his officer in the manner already described, had proceeded at once, agreeably to the permission he had obtained, toward Fort Dayton, which had been for some time garrisoned by a battalion of Continental troops under the command of Colonel Weston, but where several detachments of other corps had recently taken up their temporary quarters. The object of Valtmeyer was partly to reconnoitre the outworks of the fort for future attack, and partly to spy out any movement upon the part of Weston and his people which might indicate that Bradshawe's mission in the neighbourhood was suspected, and give him and his friends timely warning of the danger.

A well-trained Indian warrior would, as Bradshawe had hinted, have better performed this duty than the wild borderer to whom it was now intrusted ; for the character of Valtmeyer, whose vindictive daring and brutal courage has made his name terrible in the traditions of this region, was even less suited

than that of a wild Indian to the duties and responsibilities of a regular soldier. The Indian warrior, though he insists upon encountering his enemy wholly after his own fashion, is still amenable to certain rude laws of discipline, for whose observance he may be relied upon; but the white frontiersman who has led the life of a free hunter, perhaps of all other men shrinks most from every form of military subordination. And, indeed, Valtmeyer, though, to answer his own selfish purposes, he had so often been a mere tool in the hands of Bradshawe, already regretted having taken service with the Royal Rangers, and consenting to act under the command of any person save that of Wolfert Valtmeyer.

Being now wholly withdrawn from the surveillance of his officer, the worthy Wolfert, somewhat oblivious of his military duties, bethought himself how he could turn the occasion to the best account by what a similar combatant in the battle of Bennington afterward called *making war on his own hook*. In other words, he determined to amuse himself for an hour or so within the purlieus of Fort Dayton, by carrying off or slaying some of the sentinels; a species of entertainment which he thought there would be no difficulty in indulging himself in. This seizing of opposite partisans, and holding them to ransom, was always a favourite feat with Valtmeyer and his compeer Joe Bettys; and the annals of the period make it of so common occurrence in the province of New-York, that one would almost think that man-stealing was the peculiar forte of its inhabitants.

Had Wolfert, in approaching the fort, got his eye upon any of the picket-guard, he might very possibly have successfully effected his purpose. But, ill-practised as he was in the regulations of a well-ordered garrison, the adventurous hunter had not

the least idea how far the line of outposts extended ; and, like many a cunning person, he overreached himself while trying to circumvent others. In a word, he got completely within the line of defences without being at all aware of their position.

With the stealthy art of a practised deer-stalker, he managed to creep, alike unobserved by others and himself unobserving, within the outer line of pickets, which was posted in the deep shadow of a wood, to a thicket of briars, where he paused. The gleam of a sentinel's musket above the bushes had lured him thus far, and he halted to see if the sentinel himself were now visible. It seemed that he could make out nothing satisfactory as yet ; for now, throwing himself upon his chest, he continues slowly to advance, crawling through the long grass until he gains a copse of dogwood and sumach bushes within half pistol-shot of his victim. The soldier is now fully displayed to view ; Valtmeyer can see his very buttons gleam in the light of the moon, as the planet from time to time shines through the clouds which traverse her face. Another moment, and the seizure is fully accomplished. The brigand, crumpling his worsted sash in his hands, has leaped upon the sentinel just as he was turning in his monotonous walk, and borne him to the ground, while adroitly gagging his mouth before he could utter a cry.

"Pshaw ! what a cocksparrow !" muttered Wolfert, when, having dragged his captive within the bushes, he for the first time observed that it was but a stripling recruit of some sixteen or eighteen years. "I must carry away with me something better than a boy."

With these words he hastily secured the lad to a sapling by the aid of a thong which he cut from his leather hunting-shirt, and then prepared to make a similar onset upon the next sentinel in the same line.

This man had paused for a moment at the end of his walk, waiting for a glimpse of moonlight to reveal his comrade, whom he had missed in his last turn. A straggling beam fell at last upon the path before him, and the soldier, resting on his musket, leaned forward, as if trying to pierce the gloom. The side of his person was turned toward Valtmeyer, and his head only partially averted ; but Wolfert preferred seizing the present moment rather than to wait for a more favourable one, which might not come. Claspings his hands above his head, he leaped forward with a sudden bound, and threw them like a noose over the neck of the other, slipping them down below the elbows, which were thus pinioned to the side of his prisoner, whose musket dropped from his hands.

"Wolfert Valtmeyer, by the Eternal !" ejaculated the man, instantly recognising his assailant from the well-known trick which they had often practised upon each other in the mock-wrestling of former days.

"Exactly the man, Balt ; and you must go with him."

"Not unless he's a better man than ever I proved him," said Balt, struggling in the brawny arms of his brother borderer, who held him at such disadvantage.

"Donder und blixem, manny, you would not have me kill a brother hunter, would ye ?" growled Valtmeyer, whose voice thickened with anger as he felt himself compelled to use every effort to maintain his grip.

"There's—no—brother—hood—between—us—in—this—quar'l," panted forth the stout-hearted Balt, without an instant relaxing his endeavour.

"Then die the death of a rebel fool," muttered the other, hastily drawing his knife, and raising it

to strike. The blow, as driven from behind by so powerful a hand, must have cut short the biography of the worthy Balt had it fairly descended into the neck at which it was aimed. But the intent of the Tory desperado was foreseen in the very instant that the former released his grip with one hand in order to draw his knife with the other ; and Balt, dropping suddenly upon his knees as Valtmeyer, who was full a head taller than his opponent, threw the whole weight of his body into the blow, the gigantic borderer was pitched completely over the head of his antagonist, and measured his length upon the sod. The clanging of his arms as he fell raised an instant alarm among those whom the deep-breathed threatenings of these sturdy foes had not before roused. But Valtmeyer was upon his feet before Balt or the other sentinel, who rushed to the spot, could seize him. Indeed, he brought the former to the ground with a pistol-shot, stunning, but happily not wounding him, as he himself was in the act of rising. The other sentinel, who ought to have fired upon the first alarm, made a motion to charge upon him, and then threw away his shot by firing just at the instant when Valtmeyer parried the thrust of the bayonet with his knife, and, of course, simultaneously averted the muzzle of the gun from his body.

While this was passing the guard turned out ; but, though Valtmeyer received their fire unharmed as he rushed toward the wood, he escaped one danger only to fall into another. Ignorant of the existence of the outer line of sentinels, he was seized by the picket-guard in the moment that, thinking he had escaped all dangers, he relaxed his efforts to make good his advantage.

The prisoner being brought before Colonel Weston, that sagacious officer lost no time in a fruitless

examination of so determined a fellow taken under such circumstances. The redoubtable Valtmeyer was well known to him by fame, and Balt fully established his identity. Weston was before aware that the noted outlaw had taken service with one of the different corps of Butler's Rangers, and he readily conceived that he had been but now acting as the scout for some predatory band of Tories. Captain De Roos, who, as an active and efficient partisan officer, had been summoned to the fort for the very purpose of scouring the country for such offenders, was sent off with his command to make the circuit of the neighbourhood, and another detachment of troops was instantly despatched to the suspected house of Mr. Schoonmacker. The latter duty was one of some delicacy, and requiring a cooler judgment than that of De Roos; and Weston selected Major Greyslaer as the officer to whom it might best be intrusted.

De Roos, rashly insisting that he could squeeze something out of the sulky villain, was permitted to take Valtmeyer with him as a guide to the whereabouts of his friends; and Valtmeyer, after fooling with him for a season, and leading his party in every direction but the right one, finally succeeded in saving his own neck from the gallows by giving them the slip entirely. The expedition of Greyslaer had a different issue.

Ever cool and steady in his purposes when duty called upon him to collect his energies, this officer advanced with speed and secrecy to the goal he had in view. The grounds around Schoonmacker's house were crossed, and every door beset by a party of armed men in perfect quietness. Balt—who had soon recovered from the stunning effects of the pistol-shot that grazed his temple—availed himself of the lesson in soldier-craft which he had just receiv-

ed from his brother woodsman, and secured the only sentinel that was upon his post. The temptation of the beer-barrel in the kitchen proved too strong for the Indians and their newly-levied white comrades to permit their keeping a better watch. The house was, in fact, fairly surrounded by the Whig forces before a sound was heard to interrupt the harangue which Bradshawe was perorating within. MacDonald alone sprang from his seat, and, darting into an adjacent closet, made his escape through an open window in the moment that Greyslaer entered the room with a file of bayonets.

"In the name of the Continental Congress, I claim you all as my prisoners," cried Max, advancing to the table, and, with great presence of mind, seizing all the papers upon it, including the commission of Bradshawe.

That officer, who had stood for the moment astonished at the scene, now made a fiery movement to clutch the papers from Greyslaer as the latter quietly ran his eye over their superscription; but he instantly found himself pinioned by two sturdy fellows behind him.

"See that you secure that spy effectually, my men."

"Spy, sir!" cried Bradshawe, with a keen look of anxious inquiry, while he vainly tried to give his voice the tone of indignant disclaimer to the imputed character.

"Spy was the word, sir," answered Max, gravely; "and, unless these documents speak falsely, as such you will probably suffer by dawn to-morrow. This paper purports to be the commission of Walter Bradshawe as captain in Butler's regiment of Royal Rangers; and the promised promotion in this note, for certain service to be rendered this very night, leaves no doubt of the character in which

Captain Bradshawe has introduced himself into an enemy's country. Lansingh, remove your prisoner to the room on the other side of the hall, and see that he be well guarded !”

It is astonishing how invariably the success of an individual, whether in good or evil undertakings, affects his character with the vulgar ; a term which, both in its conventional as well as its primitive sense, includes, perhaps, the majority of mankind. Certain it is, that, in this instance, the very associates and complotters of the prisoner, who but an hour before had hailed his appearance among them with such cordial greetings, now slunk from his side as if he had been a convicted felon. Indeed, some of the meaner minds present even attempted to conciliate the successful party by exhibiting the strongest signs of personal aversion to Bradshawe, and of coarse gratification at the mode in which his career seemed suddenly about to be brought to a close.

These miscreants were scattered among others of both parties who were collected in the hall and grouped around the open door of the apartment in which Bradshawe, guarded by a couple of sentinels, was pacing to and fro. And while Mr. Schoonmacker and others of the leading Tories in the opposite room were listening in dignified dejection to the measures which Greyslaer stated, in the most courteous terms, it was his painful duty to adopt in regard to them, their followers were exchanging tokens of recognition with old neighbours and former comrades of the opposite party.

“ Jim, you've done the darn thing agin us to-night, and no mistake,” said one. “ But if the Injuns hadn't got as drunk as fiddlers, you couldn't have popped in upon us as you did.”

The Congress soldier made no reply ; but the de-

mure gravity of him and his comrades did not prevent others of the Tory militia from attempting a conversation with them.

"Well, Mat," said a second, "if I'm to be taken by the Whigs, I'm only glad that you happened to come up from the fort along with them ; for you are just the man to say a good word for an old friend. All this muss is of Wat Bradshawe's cooking."

"Yes," cried a third, "the friends of the king only met to drink his health and have a little social junketing together ; and if bully Bradshawe had not come among us, things would have gone off as quietly as possible. All the harm I wish him is, that he may get paid off for his old scrapes with a halter, and rid the country of such a pest ; there's the affair, now, of old De Roos's daughter, for which he ought to have swung eight years since."

"Eight years !" rejoined the other. "No, the scrape you speak of is hardly a matter of six years by gone. But give the devil his due. The few folks that knowed of it talked hard about wild Wat for his share in that business. But things could not have gone so far, after all, or the Rooses would never have refused to appear against him, much less would the gal herself have rejected his offer when he wanted to make an honest woman of her."

Bradshawe betrayed no agitation during this discussion, which took place so near to him that, though the speakers lowered their voices somewhat, it must have been at least partially overheard by himself as well as by others. But when another of the rustic gossipers pointed significantly toward the room in which Major Greyslaer was engaged, while whispering that Miss De Roos had now "a raal true-love of her own, and no mistake," the features of

the Tory captain writhed, with an expression almost fiendish.

"Yes ! I must live," he muttered internally. "I cannot, I will not die.—I have too many stakes yet in the game of life to have the cards dashed thus suddenly from my hands.—My scheme of existence is too intimately interwoven with that of others to stop here, and stop singly. I know, I feel that Alida's fate and that of this moonstruck boy is interwoven with mine.—I only can redeem her name, or blast it with utter infamy ; and their peace or my revenge—whichever is ultimately to triumph—were both a nullity if I perish now." Alas ! Walter Bradshawe, dost thou think that Providence hath but one mode of accomplishing its ends, if innocence is to be vindicated, and that only through so foul an instrument as thou !

Thus thought, or "thought he thought," this iron-hearted desperado. But there were other distracting feelings in his bosom which it were impossible for him to analyze. Though hatred had long since predominated over love in the warring passions of his stormy breast, yet that hatred was born only of the indignation and horror with which his attempts to control Alida's inclinations had been received, and his admiration had increased from the very circumstances which chilled his love ; but now the subtle workings of jealousy infused a new element among his conflicting passions, which quickened both love and hatred into a more poignant existence.

Few, even of the most ignoble natures, are *wholly* base ; and Bradshawe, though he could not conceive of, much less realize, one generous emotion that belongs to those dispositions which the world terms chivalrous, still possessed some of the qualities that keep a man from becoming despicable either to himself or to others. He had both

bravery and ability, and he knew it. Incapable of one magnanimous thought, in *deed* he might still be great ! And determined in purpose as he was loose in principle, he believed that he was a man born for the very time and country in which his lot was cast ; for, regarding all others as senseless zealots, he deemed that every man of abilities engaged in the present political struggle was an adventurer like himself, having his own selfish views as the ultimate objects of his dangers and his toils.

If the aspiring aims, then, of a reckless ambition, backed by no ordinary talent and courage the most unflinching, can redeem from ignominy a mind otherwise contracted, coarse, and selfish, Bradshawe may be enrolled upon the same list with many a hero, not less mean of soul, whom the world has consented to admire ; for the majority of mankind always look to the deeds of those who distinguish themselves beyond the herd, without much regard to the moral end which those deeds were intended to promote ; and one brilliant invading campaign of Napoleon is more dazzling to the mind than the whole military career of HIM who fought only to preserve his country ! whose Heaven-directed arms triumphed ultimately over thousands as brave as Walter Bradshawe in the field ; whose godlike counsels discomfited thousands more gifted, if not more unprincipled, in the cabinet.

But, awarding whatever credit we may to Bradshawe for his aspirations after fame, let us leave him now to awaken from the vague dream which, almost unknown to himself, had at times passed through his brain—of sharing his future renown with Alida ; and, while wiping off, in honourable marriage, the reproach which he had attached to her name, of gratifying, at the last, the passion which was rooted in his heart. Let us leave the search-

ing pang of jealousy to reveal to him first the existence of this lingering touch of tenderness amid feelings which he himself thought had become only those of hatred. Let us leave him with that utter desolation of the heart's best earthly hope, which would prompt most men to welcome the grave upon whose brink he stood, but from which he, fired with a burning lust of vengeance, shrunk as from a dungeon where the plotting brain and relentless hand of malignity would lie helpless for ever.

How little they read the man who deemed that terror of his fate had stupified him, when, obedient to the order of his captor, he moved off, with stolid and downcast look, amid the guard which conducted him to durance at the quarters of the patriots.

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CHAPTER V.

THE FIELD OF ORISKANY.

“ For it was cruel, *Black Hawk*, thus to flutter
The dovescotes of the peaceful pioneers,
To let thy tribe commit such fierce and utter
Slaughter among the folks of the frontiers.
Though thine be old, hereditary hate,
Begot in wrongs and nursed in blood until
It had become a madness, 'tis too late
To crush the hordes who have the power and will
To rob thee of thy hunting-grounds and fountains,
And drive thee backward to the Rocky Mountains.”

EDWARD SANFORD.

THE doom which Greyslaer had, with military sternness, predicted, was formally, by a military court, pronounced upon Bradshawe that very night ; but when the hour of execution arrived on the morrow, events were at hand which, postponing it for the present, gave him, in fact, the advantages of an indefinite reprieve.

Some Continental officers, of a rank superior to that of the commandant, who arrived at Fort Dayton during the night, suggested doubts as to the policy of thus summarily executing martial law upon the prisoner. In the morning a message arrived from the beleaguered garrison of Fort Stanwix, urging the Whig forces to press forward to the scene of action, and attempt raising the siege at once, or their succour would come too late to save their compatriots. All was then bustle and motion. The greater part of the troops at once hurried forward to join Herkimer's forces, which had already taken up their line of march for Oriskany, while a

detachment was sent down the river to speed on those who still loitered on the road, to the border. When this last was about to depart, the opportunity was deemed a good one of getting rid of Bradshawe, by sending him to headquarters at Albany, where his sentence could either be enforced or remitted, as a higher military authority should decide; and he was accordingly marched off, strictly guarded by the detachment.

Of the use that Walter Bradshawe made of this reprieve to carry into effect his meditated vengeance against Alida and her lover, we shall see hereafter. We must now return to other personages of our story, who have been, perhaps, too long forgotten.

It has been already incidentally mentioned that Brant and his followers were playing a conspicuous part in the bold invasion which now threatened to give the royalists possession of at least two thirds of the fair province of New-York, if, indeed, they should not succeed in overrunning the whole. Brant, who had brought nearly a thousand Iroquois warriors to the standard of St. Leger, was indeed the very soul of the expedition; for, if there be a doubt of his devising the scheme itself, he certainly planned some of its most important details; and the zeal with which he executed his share of the undertaking proved how thoroughly his heart was engaged in it. The Johnsons, indeed, had come back to struggle once more for a noble patrimony which had been wrested from them, and many of their refugee friends were animated by the hope of recovering the valuable estates they had forfeited; but Brant fought to recover the ancient seats of his people, whose name as a nation was in danger of being blotted out from the land.

When, therefore, he learned, through his scouts, that Herkimer was approaching by forced marches

to break up the encampment of St. Leger, relieve Fort Stanwix, and repel the advance of the invaders through the valley of which it was the portal, he instantly suggested measures for his discomfiture, and planned that masterly ambuscade which resulted in the bloody field of Oriskany.

There is, within a few miles of Fort Stanwix, a deep hollow or ravine which intersects the forest road by which Herkimer and his brave but undisciplined army of partisan forces were approaching to St. Leger's lines. The ravine sweeps toward the east in a semicircular form, either horn of the crescent thus formed bearing a northern and southern direction, and enclosing a level and elevated piece of ground upon the western side. The bottom of the ravine was marshy, and the road crossed it by means of a causeway. This was the spot selected by Brant for attacking the column of Herkimer ; and hither St. Leger had sent a large force of royalists to take post with his Indians on the morning of the fatal sixth of August.

The white troops, consisting of detachments from Claus's and Butler's Rangers and Johnson's Greens, with a battalion of Major Watts's Royal New-Yorkers, disposed themselves in the form of a semicircle, with a swarm of Red warriors clustering like bees upon either extremity ; and it would seem as if nothing could save Herkimer's column from annihilation, should it once push fairly within the horns of the crescent thus formed. The fortunes of war, however, turn upon strange incidents ; and in the present instance, the very circumstance which hurried hundreds of brave men among the patriots upon their fate, was a cause of preservation to their comrades.

The veteran General Herkimer, who was a wary and experienced bush-fighter, aware of the charac-

ter of this ground, had ordered a halt when within a few hundred yards of the spot where the battle was ultimately joined ; but, irritated by the mutinous remonstrances of some of his insubordinate followers, several of whom flatly charged the stout old general with cowardice, he gave the order to " march on " while his ranks were yet in confusion ; and eagerly was the order obeyed by the rash gathering of border yeomanry.

" March on," shouted the fiery Cox and ill-fated Eisenlord. " March on," thundered the Herculean Gardinier and Samson-like Dillenback, whose puissant deeds at Oriskany have immortalized their names in border story. " March on," echoed the patriotic Billington and long-regretted Paris, and many another brave civilian and gallant gentleman, whom neither rank, nor station, nor want of skill in arms had prevented from volunteering upon this fatal field—the first and last they ever saw ! " March on," shouted the hot-headed De Roos, catching up the cry as quickly it ran from rank to rank, and dashing wildly forward, he scarce knew where.

And already the foremost files have descended into the hollow, and others, pressing from behind, are pouring in a living tide to meet the opposing shock below.

The impatience of Brant's warriors does not allow them to wait until the Whig forces have all descended into the ravine ; but, raising their well-known war-cry, the Mohawks pour a volley, which nearly annihilates half of Herkimer's foremost division, and wholly cuts off the remainder from the support of their comrades. Uprising then among the bushes, they spring with tomahawk and javelin upon the panic-stricken corps, already broken and borne down by that first onslaught. The Refugees push forward with their bayonets to share in the mas-

sacre of their countrymen. But now fresh foes are rushing upon them in turn. Headstrong and impetuous themselves, or urged on by the fiery masses that press upon them from behind, they descend like an avalanche from the plain above, and fill that little vale with carnage and destruction ; now swooping down to be dispersed in death, and now bearing with them a resistless force that hurls hundreds who oppose it into eternity.

The leaders of both parties soon began to see that this indiscriminate melee could result in no positive advantage to either, while involving the destruction of both ; and, in a momentary pause of the conflict, the voices of Herkimer's officers and of the opposing leaders were simultaneously heard calling upon their men to betake themselves to the bushes and form anew under their cover. And now the fight is somewhat changed in its character. Major Greyslaer, seeing the causeway partially cleared of its struggling combatants, rallies a compact band of well-disciplined followers, and charges the thickets in advance. But the throng through which he cleaves a passage closes instantly behind him, and, with the loss of half his men, he is obliged to cut his way back to his comrades, where the chieftain Teondetha, with his Oneida rifles, covers the shattered band till Greyslaer can take new order.

The Whig yeomanry, in the mean time, had for the most part taken post behind the adjacent trees, where each man, as from a citadel of his own, made war upon the enemy by keeping up an incessant firing. But Brant, whose Indians were chiefly galled by these sharpshooters, gave his orders, and the Mohawks, wherever they saw the flash of a rifle, would rush up, and, with lance or tomahawk, despatch the marksman before he could gain time to reload. Balt, whose unerring rifle had already

made many a foeman bite the dust, had ensconced himself behind a shattered oak, a little in advance of a thicket of birch and juniper, from which Christian Lansingh, with others of Greyslaer's followers, kept up a steady fire, and thus covered Balt's position. The worthy hunter absolutely foamed with rage when he saw several of his acquaintance, who were less protected than himself, thus falling singly beneath the murderous tomahawks of Brant's people; but his anger received a new turn when he beheld Greyslaer breaking his cover and rushing with clubbed rifle after one of the retreating Mohawks, who had despatched an unfortunate militiaman within a few paces of him.

"Goody Lordy!" he exclaimed, "the boy's mad! He'll spoil the breaching or bend the bar'l of the best rifle in the county. Tormented lightning! though, how he's buried the brass into him."

Greyslaer, as Balt spoke, drove the angular metal with which the stock of the weapon was shod deep into the brain of the flying savage, while Balt himself, in the same moment, brought down a javelin man who was flying to the assistance of the other.

"Aha! ain't that the caper on't, you pisen copper-head! Down, major, down," shouted the woodsman, as his quick ear caught the click of a dozen triggers in the opposite thicket; and Max, obedient to the word, threw himself upon his face, while the fire of a whole platoon of Tory rangers, that was instantly answered by a volley from his own men, passed harmlessly over him.

The dropping shots now became less frequent, for the borderers on either side were so well protected by the woodland cover, that, though the clothes of many were riddled with bullets, yet the grazing of an elbow or some slight flesh-wound in

the leg was all the execution done by those who were as practised in avoiding exposure to the aim of an enemy, as in availing themselves with unerring quickness of each chance of planting a bullet.

General Herkimer, who had already seen Greyslaer's spirited effort to cut his way through the enemy with a handful of men, deemed this the fitting time to execute the movement upon a larger scale. The fatal causeway was again thronged by the patriots in the instant they heard the voice of their leader exhorting his troops to force the passage in which their bravest had already fallen. But, even before they could form, and in the moment that those closing ranks exposed themselves, a murderous fire was poured in upon them on every side ; every tree and bush seemed to branch out with flame.

Thrice, with desperate valour, did Herkimer cross the causeway and charge the thronged hillside in front ; and thrice the files who rushed into the places of the fallen were mowed down by the deadly rifles from the thickets, or beaten back by the cloud of spears and tomahawks that instantly thickened in the path before them. In the third charge the veteran fell, a musket-ball, which killed his horse, having shattered his knee while passing through the body of the charger.

But the fall of their general, instead of disheartening, seems only to nerve his brave followers with new determination of spirit, as, placed on his saddle beneath a tree, the stout old soldier still essays to order the battle. His manly tones, heard even above the din of the conflict, give system and efficacy to the brave endeavour of his broken ranks. The tree against which he leans becomes a central point round which they rally, fighting now, not for conquest—hardly for self-preservation—but only in

stubborn resistance of their fate. And now, as the enemy, impatient of this long opposition, concentrate round them, they form in circles, and receive in silence the furious charge of their hostile countrymen. Bayonet crosses bayonet, or the clubbed rifle batters the opposing gunstock as they fight hand to hand and foot to foot. Again and again do the royalists recoil from the wall of iron hearts against which they have hurled themselves. But, though the living rampart yields not, it begins to crumble with these successive shocks; the ranks of the patriots grow thinner around their wounded general, where brave men strew the ground like leaves when the autumn is serest.

The Indian allies upon either side have, in the mean time, suspended their firing. In vain does the voice of Brant encourage his Mohawks to strike a blow which shall at once decide this fearful crisis. In vain does the gallant shout of Teondetha cheer on the Oneidas to rescue his friends from the destruction that hedges them in. Not an Indian will move in that green-wood. The warriors of the forest upon both sides have paused to watch this terrible death-struggle between white men of the same country and language. They have already ceased to fire upon each other; and now, gazing together upon the well-matched contest of those who involved them in this family quarrel, they will not raise an arm to strike for either party.

A storm, a terrific midsummer tempest, such as often marks the sudden vicissitudes of our climate, was the Heaven-directed interposition which stayed the slaughter of that battle-field. The breath of the thunder-gust swept the rain in sheets of foam through the forest, and the hail burst down in torrents upon those warring bands, whose arms now

flashed only as they glinted back the lightning's glare.

There is a pause, then, in the bloody fight of Oriskany ; but the battle, which seemed but now nearly ended in the overthrow of the patriots, is soon to be resumed under different auspices. The royalists have withdrawn for the moment to a spot where a heavier forest-growth affords them some protection from the elements. The republicans have conveyed their wounded general to an adjacent knoll, from which, exposed as it is to the fire of the enemy, he insists upon ordering the battle when it shall be resumed ; and here, in the heat of the onslaught which succeeded, the sturdy old border chief was observed, with great deliberation, to take his flint and tinder-box from his pocket, light his pipe, and smoke with perfect composure. The veteran bush-fighter, who missed many an officer around him, grieved not the less for more than one favourite rifle-shot who had perished among his private soldiers ; and, in order to counteract the mode of warfare adopted by Brant, when, in the early part of the battle, the Indian spears and tomahawks made such dreadful havoc among the scattered riflemen, Herkimer commanded his sharpshooters to station themselves in pairs behind a single tree, and one always to reserve his fire till the Indians should rush up to despatch his comrade when loading.

In the mean time, while the different dispositions for attack and defence were thus making by their leaders, the rude soldiers on either side, hundreds of whom were mutually acquainted, exchanged many a bitter jeer with each other, while ever and anon, as some taunting cry would rise among the young warriors of Brant's party, it was echoed by the opposing Oneidas with a fierce whoop of de-

fiance, that would pierce wildly amid the peltings of the storm.

An hour elapsed before an abatement of the tempest allowed the work of death to commence anew. A movement on the part of the royalists by Major Watts's battalion, first drew the fire of the patriots; and then the Mohawks, cheered on by the terrible war-whoop of Brant, and uttering yell on yell to intimidate their foes, commenced the onslaught, tomahawk in hand. But the cool execution done by the marksmen whom Herkimer had so wisely planted to sustain each other, made them quickly recoil; and the Oneidas, eagerly pressing forward from the republican side, drove them back upon a large body of Butler's Rangers. Many of this corps had been so severely handled by Greyslaer's men in the first part of the battle, that they had fallen back to take care of their wounded. But Bradshawe's company, which had suffered least, was now in advance. These fierce men brooked no control from the young subaltern who was now nominally their commander. Headed by the terrible Valtmeyer, whose clothes were smeared with the gore from a dozen scalps which dangled at his waist, they broke their ranks, rushed singly upon the Oneidas, who had intruded into their lair, and, driving them back among their friends, became the next moment themselves mixed up in wild *melée* with partisans of the other side. This onslaught served as a signal for a rival corps in another part of the field; and Claus's Rangers broke their cover to battle with their foemen hand to hand.

This corps of refugee royalists consisted of men enlisted chiefly from the very neighbourhood where they were now fighting. They had come back to their former homes, bearing with them the hot thirst of vengeance against their former friends and

neighbours ; and when they heard the triumphant shout of the Whigs at a momentary recoil of their friends, and perhaps recognised the voices of some who had aided in driving them from their country, their impatience could not be restrained ; they rushed forward with a fiendish yell of hatred and ferocity, while the patriots, instead of awaiting the charge, in obedience to the commands of their officer, sprang like 'chafed tigers from their covert, and met them in the midst. Bayonets and clubbed muskets made the first shock fatal to many ; but these were quickly thrown aside as the parties came in grappling contact, drawing their knives and throttling each other, stabbing, and literally dying in each other's embrace.*

And thus, for five long hours, raged this ruthless conflict. All military order had been lost in the moment when the wild bush-fighters first broke their cover and rushed forward to decide the battle hand to hand. Men fought with the fury of demons ; or if, by chance, a squad or party of five or six found themselves acting together, these would quickly form, rush forward, and, charging into the thickest of the fight, soon be lost amid the crowd of combatants. At one moment the tomahawk of some fierce Red warrior would crash among the bayonets and spears of whites and Indians as he hewed his way to rescue some comrade that was beset by clustering foes ; at another, the shattering of shafts and clashing of steel would be heard where a sturdy pioneer, with his back to a tree, stood, axe in hand, cleaving down a soldier at every blow, or matching the cherished tool of his craft with the ponderous mace of some brawny savage. Now the groans of the dying, mixed with imprecations deep and foul, rose harshly above the din of the

* Stone, Campbell, Morris.

battle, and now the dismal howl or exulting yell of the red Indian was mocked by a thousand demoniac voices, screeching wild through the forest, as if the very fiends of hell were let loose in that black ravine.

The turmoil of the elements has long since subsided. The sky is clear and serene above. Happily, the forest glooms interpose a veil between its meek, holy eye, and this dance of devilish passions upon the earth.

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CHAPTER VI.

THE ISSUES OF THE BATTLE.

"Let me recall to your recollection the bloody field where Herkimer fell. There were found the Indian and the white man, born on the banks of the Mohawk, their left hand clinched in each other's hair, the right grasping in the gripe of death the knife plunged in each other's bosom. Thus they lay frowning."—*Discourse of Gouverneur Morris before the New-York Historical Society, 1812.*

AN accomplished statesman and eloquent writer has, in the passage which heads this chapter, well depicted the appearance which the field of Oriskany presented when the fight was over. The battle itself, while the most bloody fought during the Revolution, is remarkable for having been contested exclusively between Americans, or, at least, between those who, if not natives of the soil, were all denizens of the province in which it was fought. And though its political consequences were of slight moment, for both parties claimed the victory, yet, from the character of the troops engaged in it—from the number of Indian warriors that were arrayed upon either side—the protracted fierceness of the action, and the terrible slaughter which marked its progress, it must be held the most memorable conflict that marked our seven years' struggle for national independence.

Of the field officers that fell, it is true that most, like the brave Herkimer himself, were only militiamen, and of no great public consideration beyond their own county : but with these gallant gentlemen were associated as volunteers more than one mili-

tary man of rank and repute that had been won upon other fields ; and many a civilian of eminence, who, at the call of patriotism, had shouldered a musket and met his death as a private soldier. The combatants upon either side consisting almost exclusively of inhabitants of the Mohawk Valley, there were so many friends and neighbours, kinsmen, and even brothers arrayed against each other, that the battle partook of the nature of a series of private feuds, in which the most bitter feelings of the human heart were brought into play between the greater part of those engaged. And when the few who were actuated by a more chivalric spirit—like the gallant Major Watts of the Royal New-Yorkers, and others who might be designated among his hostile compatriots—met in opposing arms, they too fought with a stubborn valour, as if the military character of their native province depended equally upon the dauntless bearing of either party. The annalist has elsewhere preserved so many minute and thrilling details of Herkimer's last field,* that it hardly becomes us to recapitulate them here, though we would fain recall some of those traits of chivalrous gallantry and generous daring which redeem the brutal ferocity of the contest.

The deeds of the brave Captain Dillenback, though his name is not intermingled with the thread of our story, are so characteristic of the times in which its scenes are laid, that they can hardly be passed over. This officer had his private enemies among those who were now arrayed in battle as public foes ; and Wolfert Valtmeyer, with three others among the most desperate of the Refugees, determined to seize his person in the midst of the fight, and carry him off for some purpose best known to themselves. Watching their opportunity, these

* See Stone's Border Wars of the American Revolution.

four desperadoes, when the tumult of the conflict was at the highest, cut their way to the spot where Dillenback was standing; and one of them succeeded in mastering his gun for a moment. But Dillenback, who caught sight of Valtmeyer's well-known form pressing forward to aid his comrades in the capture, knew better than to trust himself to the tender mercies of his outlaw band. He swore that he would not be taken alive, and he was not. Wrenching his gun from the grasp of the first assailant, he felled him to the earth with the breech, shot the second dead, and plunged the bayonet into the heart of the third. But in the moment of his last triumph the brave Whig was himself laid dead by a pistol-shot from Valtmeyer, who chanced to be the fourth in coming up to him.

But perhaps as true a chevalier as met his fate amid all that host of valiant hearts was a former friend of Balt the woodsman; an old Mohawk hunter, who bore the uncouth Dutch name of *Bronkhorlst*.

It was in the heat of the fight, when Brant's dusky followers, flitting from tree to tree, had at one time almost surrounded Greyslaer's small command, that Balt, in the thickest of the fire, heard a well-known voice calling him by name from behind a large tree near; and, looking out from the huge trunk which sheltered his own person, he recognised the only Indian with whom his prejudices against the race had ever allowed him to be upon terms of intimacy.

"Come, my brother," said the Iroquois warrior, in his own tongue, "come and escape death or torture by surrendering to your old friend, who pledges the word of a Mohawk for your kind treatment and protection."

"Rather to you than to anybody, my noble old

boy ; but Balt will be prisoner this day to no mortal man. My name is *Nozun Dotji*—he that never shirks.”

“ And my name,” cried the Indian, “ is *The Killer of Brave Men* ; so come on ; we are happily met.” With these words both parties threw down their rifles, and, drawing their knives, rushed upon each other.

The struggle was only a brief one ; for Time, who had nerved the brawny form of the white borderer into the full maturity of manly strength, had dealt less leniently with the aged Indian, who was borne at once to the ground as they closed in the death-grapple. It was in vain that Balt, mindful of other days and kinder meetings in the deep woodlands, attempted to save his opponent’s life by making him a prisoner ; for, in the moment that he mastered the scalping-knife of the Indian and pinioned his right arm to the ground, the latter, writhing beneath his adversary with the flexibility of a serpent, brought up his knee so near to his left hand as to draw the leg-knife from beneath the garter, and dealt Balt a blow in his side which nothing but his hunting-shirt of tough elk-hide prevented from being fatal. Even as it was, the weapon, after sliding an inch or two, cut through the arrow-proof garment that ere now had turned a sabre ; while Balt, feeling the point graze upon his ribs, thought that his campaigning days were over, and, in the exasperation of the moment, buried his knife to the hilt in the bare bosom of Bronkahorlst.

“ We are going together, old boy,” he cried, as he sank back with a momentary faintness. “ I only hope we’ll find the game as plenty in your hunting-ground of spirits as we have on the banks of the Sacandaga—God forgive me for being sich a heathen !”

But while this singular duel, with personal encounters of a similar nature, were taking place in one part of the field, others more eventful in their consequences were transpiring elsewhere. The puissant deeds of Captain Gardinier, like those of Dillenback, have given his name a place upon the sober page of history ; but, as they involved the fate of more than one of the personages of our story, we have no hesitation in recapitulating them here.

One principal cause, perhaps, why the Whigs maintained their ground with such desperate tenacity, was the hope that, so soon as the sound of their firearms should reach the invested garrison of Fort Stanwix, a sally would be attempted by the besieged to effect a diversion in their favour. That sally, so famous in our Revolutionary history, and which gave to WILLET, who conducted it, the name of "*the hero of Fort Stanwix*," did, in fact, take place before the close of the battle of Oriskany, and was, as we all know, attended with the most brilliant success. But, long before the performance of that gallant feat of Willet's, the Tory partisan, Colonel Butler, aware of the hopes which animated his Whig opponents at Oriskany, essayed a ruse de guerre, which had wellnigh eventuated in their complete destruction.

This wily officer, withdrawing a large detachment of Johnson's Greens from the field of action, partially disguised them as Republican troops by making them change their hats for those of their fallen enemies ; and then adopting the patriot colours and other party emblems as far as they could, they made a circuit through the woods, and turned the flank of the Whigs in the hope of gaining the midst of them by coming in the guise of a timely re-enforcement sent from the fort.

The hats of these soldiers appearing first through the bushes, cheered Herkimer's men at once. The cry was instantly raised that succour was at hand. Many of the undisciplined yeomanry broke from their stations, and ran to grasp the hands of their supposed *friends*.

"Beware ! beware ! 'tis the enemy ; don't you see their green coats ?" shouted Captain Gardinier, whose company of dismounted rangers was nearest to these new-comers. But, even as he spoke, one of his own soldiers, a slight stripling, recognising his own brother among the Greens, and supposing him embarked in the same cause with himself, rushed forward to embrace him. His outstretched hand was seized with no friendly grasp by his hostile kinsman ; for the Tory brother, fastening a ferocious gripe upon the credulous Whig, dragged him within the opposing lines, exclaiming only, as he flung him backward amid his comrades, " See, some of ye, to the d—d young rebel, will ye ?"

" For God's sake, brother, let them not kill me ! Do you not know me ?" shrieked the youthful patriot, as he clutched at one of those amid whom he fell, to shield him from the blows that were straightway aimed at his life.

But his brother had other work to engage him at this instant ; for the gallant Gardinier, observing the action and its result, seized a partisan from a corporal who stood near, and, wielding the spear like a quarter staff, dealt his blows to the right and left so vigorously that he soon beat back the disordered group and liberated his man, who, clubbing his rifle as he sprang to his feet, instantly levelled his treacherous brother in the dust. But Gardinier and his stripling soldier were now in the midst of the Greens, unsupported by any of their comrades ; and the sturdy Major MacDonald, who this day had ta-

ken duty with a detachment of Johnson's men, rushed forward sword in hand to cut down Gardinier in the same moment that two of the disguised Greens sprang upon him from behind. Struggling with almost superhuman strength to free himself from their grasp, the spurs of the Whig Ranger became entangled in the clothes of his adversaries, and he was thrown to the ground. Both of his thighs were instantly transfixed to the earth by the bayonets of two of his assailants, while MacDonald, presenting the point of his rapier to his throat, cried out to "Yield himself, rescue or no rescue." But Gardinier did not yet dream of yielding.

Seizing the blade of the sword with his left hand, the trooper, by a sudden wrench, brings the Highlander down upon his own person, where he holds him for a moment as a shield against the assault of others. At this moment, Adam Miller for the first time sees the struggle of Gardinier against this fearful odds. His sword is already out and crimson with the blood of more than one foe ; and now, rushing forward, he lays about him so industriously, that the Greens are compelled to defend themselves against their new adversary. Gardinier, raising himself to a sitting posture, bears back MacDonald ; but the gallant Scot, still clinching the throat of his foe with his left hand, braces himself firmly on one knee, and turns to parry the phrensied blows of Miller with his right. Gardinier has but one hand at liberty, and that is lacerated by the rapier which he had grasped so desperately ; yet, quick as light, he seizes the spear which is still lying near him, and plants it to the barb in the side of MacDonald. The chivalric Highlander expires without a groan.

The Greens, struck with dismay at the fate of this veteran officer, the near friend of Sir John

Johnson, fall back upon those of their comrades who have not yet broken their ranks ; while those lookers-on, stung with grief for the loss of such an officer, rally instantly to the charge, and pour in a volley upon the Whigs, who have just succeeded in dragging the wounded Gardinier out of the *melée*. Several fall, but their death is avenged on the instant ; yet dearly avenged, for the blow which follows, while it terminates the battle, concludes the existence of one of the most gallant spirits embarked in it.

Young Derrick de Roos on that day had enacted wonders of prowess. And though the rashness he exhibited made his early soubriquet of "Mad Dirk" remembered by more than one of his comrades, yet he seemed somehow to bear a charmed life while continually rushing to and fro wherever the fight was hottest. At the very opening of the conflict, when most of the mounted Rangers threw themselves from their saddles and took to the bushes with their rifles,* De Roos, with but a handful of troopers to back him, drew his sword and charged into the thickets from which came the first fire of the ambushed foe.

"It is impossible for cavalry to act upon such ground," exclaimed an officer, seeing him about to execute this mad movement. De Roos, who, on the march, was leading his horse, did not heed the remark as he threw himself into the saddle. "Your spurs—where are your spurs, man?" cried another, as the horse, flurried by the first fire, rose on his

* The horses of mounted riflemen are generally, during a frontier fight, secured to a tree in some hollow or behind some knoll, which protects them from the enemy's fire. Not infrequently, however, the sagacious animal is trained, in obedience to the order of his master, to crouch among the leaves, or couch down like a dog behind some fallen tree, while the rider, protected by the same natural rampart, fires over his body.

hinder legs instead of dashing forward. "Charge not without your spurs, captain!"

"I'm going to win my spurs," shouted Mad Dirk, striking the flanks of the steed with the flat of his sabre, which the next moment gleamed above his head as the spirited animal, gathering courage from his fiery rider, bounded forward in the charge.

In the instant confusion that followed, De Roos was no more seen; the smoke, indeed, sometimes revealed his orange plume floating like a tongue of flame amid its wreaths; and his "Carry on, carry on, men," for a few moments cheered the ears of the friends who could distinguish his gay and reckless voice even amid the earnest shouts of the white borderers, mingled as they were with the wild slogan of the Indian warriors. But De Roos himself appeared no more until, in the pause of the battle already mentioned, he presented himself among his compatriots, exclaiming,

"I've used up all my men! Is there no handful of brave fellows here who will rally under Dirk de Roos when we set-to again?"

The fearful slaughter which, as is known, took place among Herkimer's officers at the very outset of the fight, and almost with the first volley from Brant's people, left men enough among those undisciplined bands to furnish forth a stout array of volunteers, who were eager to fight under so daring a leader; and when the battle was renewed, the wild partisan went into it with a train more numerous than before. But his horse had long since been killed under him; the followers upon whom he was in the habit of relying had fallen, either dead or disabled, by his side; and Derrick, somewhat sobered in spirit, became more economical of his resources. And, though still exposing his own person as much as ever, he was vigilant in seeing that his men were

well covered, while he hoarded their energies to strike some well-directed blow which might terminate the battle.

With the last volley of the Greens he thought the fitting moment had come. His bugle sounded a charge, and on rushed his band with the bayonet.

"Carry on, carry on," shouted De Roos, who charged, sword in hand, a musket's length ahead of his foremost files.

It seemed impossible for the weary royalists to stand up against this column; for small in number as were the men who composed it, they were comparatively fresh, from a short breathing spell which they had enjoyed; while their spirits were excited to the utmost by their having been kept back by their officer as he waited for the approaching crisis before permitting a man to move. But the line of the royalists, though broken and uneven, was still so much longer than that of the patriots, that, outflanking their assailants as they did, they had only to permit their headlong foe to pass through, and then fall upon his rear.

This movement the Greens effected with equal alacrity and steadiness. Their ranks opened with such quickness that they seemed to melt like a wave before De Roos's impetuous charge; but, wavelike too, they closed again behind his little band, which was thus cut off from the patriot standard. Furious at being thus caught in the toils, the fierce republicans wheel again, and madly endeavour to cut their way back to their friends; but the equally brave royalists far outnumber them, and their fate for the moment seems sealed, when suddenly another player in this iron game presents himself.

Max Greyslaer, who, from a distance, has watched the movement of his friend with the keenest anxiety, sees the unequal struggle upon which the

fortunes of the whole battle are turning. He has fought all day on foot, and, wounded and weary, he seems too far from the spot upon which all the chances of the fight are now concentrated to reach it ere they are decided. He looks eagerly around for assistance; he shouts madly to those who are closer to De Roos to press forward; and, bounding over a fallen tree near him, he stumbles upon the trained horse of a rifleman, which has been taught to crouch in the thickets for safety. The couchant steed—but now so quiet when masterless—rises with a grateful winnow as Max seizes his bridle; and, gladly yielding his back to so featly a rider, he tosses his head with proud neighings as he feels himself no longer a passive sharer in the dangers of the field. On comes the gallant horse. The rider gathers new life from the fresh spirits of his steed. He sweeps—'twas thus the warlike saints of old swept before the eyes of knightly combatants—he sweeps meteor-like across the field, and charges with his flashing brand, singly against the royal host. Down goes the green banner of the Johnsons; down goes the sturdy banner-man, shorn to the earth by that trenchant blade.

The Greens, attacked thus impetuously in their rear, turn partly round to confront this bold assailant; but Greyslaer has already cloven his way through their line, and Christian Lansingh, with a score of active borderers, have rushed tumultuously into his wake. The royalists are broken and forced back laterally on either side of the pathway thus made; but either fragment of the disjointed band still struggles to reunite with desperate valour. The republicans, concentrating their forces upon one at a time, charge both parties alternately. Thrice wheeling with the suddenness of a falcon in mid air, has Greyslaer hurled himself upon their crumbling

ranks ; and now, as one division is nearly annihilated by that last charge, De Roos, emulous of his friend, heads the onslaught against the remaining fragment of the royalists. His orange plume again floats foremost ; and loud as when the fight was new, his cheering voice is heard,

“ Carry on, men, carry o—”

An Indian whoop—the last that was heard upon the field of Oriskany—followed the single shot which hushed that voice and laid that orange plume in the dust.

Both Mohawks and royalists had already mostly withdrawn from the field ; and the remainder of the Greens, who had contested it to the last so stubbornly, retired when they saw De Roos fall.*

* Brant and his Tory confederates carried off so many prisoners with them from the field of Oriskany that the battle is often spoken of as a defeat of the Whigs. But as these prisoners were taken in the early part of the action and during the first confusion of the ambuscade, the meed of victory must be accorded to the patriots, who were left in possession of the battle-field ; fearful, however, as was the general slaughter, the loss of life upon the royalist side seems to have been chiefly among the Indian warriors, while on the republican side the whites suffered far more than did their Oneida allies.

CHAPTER VII.

THE DOUBTFUL PARENTAGE.

"True joy, still born of heaven, is blessed with wings,
And, tired of earth, it plumes them back again :
And so we lose it. A sad change came o'er
The fortunes of that pair, whose loves have been
Our theme of story—a sad change, that oft
Comes o'er love's fortunes in all lands and homes."

SIMMS.

THEY were busy making rude litters for the wounded upon that field of slaughter. The brave Herkimer, who so soon died of his injury, was already borne off; but most of his surviving followers yet remained. There were groups of mournful faces around the dying, and here and there a desolate-looking man was seen stalking over the field, pausing from time to time in his dreary quest, looking around now with quick and painful glances, and now, with a half-fearful air, stooping over some gory corse, as if seeking some near friend or kinsman among the fallen.

By the root of a dusky tamarack lay a bleeding officer, whose pale features showed that he was yet young in years; while another of similar age was busied stanching the blood which oozed in torrents from his side. A kneeling soldier offered a vessel of water; a grizzly hunter held the feet of the dying man in his bosom, as if to cherish the extremities that were rapidly growing cold. A grave Indian stood mutely looking on. If he indeed sorrows in heart like the others, his smooth cheek and quiet

eye betray not the agitation which paints their faces with emotion.

It is of no avail, the kindness of that ministering group of friends. The dying man, indeed, once opens his eyes, and he seems to murmur something, which the other officer bends forward with the most earnest solicitation to hear. He seems to have some charge or bequest of wishes to make to his friend ; but his thoughts cannot syllable themselves into connected utterance. His wound seems to gather virulence from each successive effort ; yet still he squanders his remaining strength in futile attempts to communicate with his friends. Alas ! why did he not speak before, that luckless soldier, if life's last moments were so precious to him ?

"I know—I know—it is of Guise, the Indian child, you would speak," cried the agonized friend, as the sudden thought started into his mind. "It is the mystery of his birth—it is your wishes about your own offspring that you would declare. God of Heaven, pardon and spare him for a moment. Press my hand, Derrick, if I have guessed truly that the child is yours ; make any—the least, the feeblest sign, and your boy shall be as dear to Greyslaer as his own."

But Derrick died and *gave no sign* ! His last breath went out in the moment that his agitated friend, for the first time, conjectured what he intended to reveal.

They buried him beneath that dusky tamarack ; and there let him lay, a gallant, frank-hearted soldier, whose bravery and generosity of disposition will be remembered in his native valley long after the blemishes, or, rather, the inherent defects of his character are forgotten ; a character not altogether inestimable, far less unloveable, at that graceful season of life when the wildest sallies of youth are for-

gotten in the generous impulses which seem to prompt them, but which, unregulated by one steadfast principle, is perhaps, of all others, the most likely to degenerate into utter profligacy and selfishness when age shall have chilled the social flow of its feelings, and habit confirmed the reckless indulgence of its own humours.

It was well, then, perhaps, for the memory of the gay and high-spirited De Roos, that his career closed as it did ; but the sorrowing group who are now retiring from his hastily-made grave would spurn the solace which such a reflection might impart. The three white men have scattered twigs and tufts of grass over the spot before they leave it ; and they turn to see why the Indian still lingers behind them ; an exclamation of displeasure, as at beholding some heathen rite, bursts from the lips of Greyslaer as he sees a column of smoke arise from a pile of brush which Teondetha has already heaped together.

"The pagan Redskin, what is he doing ?" muttered Christian Lansingh.

"Teondetha is wise," said Balt, sadly, in the only words of kindness he had ever spoken to the young chief. "He has preserved all that remains of poor Captain Dirk ; for the wild beasts will never scratch through the ashes to disturb him."

The Indian replied not, and they all left the battle-field in silence.

Tradition tells of the horrid spectacle which that field exhibited three days afterward, when the wolves, the bears, and the panthers, with which the adjacent forests at that time abounded, had been busy among the graves of the slain ; but the simple precaution of Teondetha preserved from violation the last resting-place of the friend of his boyhood.

Of the others that fell in this ensanguined conflict, it belongs to history rather than to us to speak.

The annalist of Tryon county* tells us, that in the whole Valley of the Mohawk there was scarcely a family which had not lost some member; scarcely a man, woman, or child who had not some relative to deplore after the fatal field of Oriskany. Brant's warriors had suffered so severely that his immediate band of Mohawks was nearly all cut to pieces; but, deeply as the chieftain grieved for the loss of his brave followers, he had still room in his heart to lament his friend MacDonald. At this point we shall probably take leave of the famous Sachem, whose career, though it grows more and more thrilling in interest through the successive scenes of the civil war along this border, is haply no farther interwoven with the thread of our narrative.

Teondetha, too, though he may possibly again flit across our page, we must now dismiss with his Oneidas to the ancient seats of his people, where they finally halted after cruelly harassing the rear of the flying St. Leger. That officer, as is known, broke up his lines before Fort Stanwix upon Arnold's approach to Fort Dayton, and effected a most disastrous retreat to the wilds from which he had emerged with such boastful anticipations. Of the officers to whom the arduous duty of pursuing him into the wilderness was intrusted, few were more distinguished for zeal and efficiency than Major Greyslaer, whose knowledge of forest life enabled him to co-operate to the greatest advantage with the Oneida allies of the patriot cause.

Returning from this arduous and perilous service, Greyslaer, when halting to refresh his men at the Oneida Castle, had an opportunity of witnessing the wedded happiness of "The Spreading Dew," who was long since united to her true warrior, and who welcomed him with proud feelings of gratification

* Campbell.

to her husband's lodge. He sympathized with the fortunate issue of their simple loves, even while he sighed to think that the course of his own, which had never run too smoothly, was still far from bright.

It was impossible for him to be near Alida in the first days of her grief, when the tidings should reach her that her only brother, the last male of her family, the last near relation she had on earth, had been taken away ; but he had promised himself that many weeks should not elapse before she should find a comfort in the society of one who would leave no means untried that kindness could suggest to alleviate her sorrows ; who would in all things endeavour to supply the place of him who could return no more. And, truly, if the ever-watchful consideration, the tender and fostering care, the minute and gentle offices of affection suggested by a heart of inborn delicacy and feeling—if these cherishing ministrations at the hands of a stranger to our blood can ever supply the loss of a natural tie, Max Greyslaer was the man of all others whose sympathies would be most balmful at such a season. Alida herself, though in the first agony of her grief she would have shrunk from communion even with Greyslaer, yet, when the paroxysm had passed away, looked naturally to her lover—the earliest and closest friend of the brother she had lost—as her best consoler ; and she yearned for his appearance by her side with that impatience of disappointment or delay which, though chiefly characteristic of poor Derrick's impetuous and irrestrainable disposition, was in no slight degree shared as a family trait by his sister. But the day was far distant when the lovers were again to meet ; and Destiny had strange things in store for them ere that meet-

ing, now so eagerly desired by either, was to be brought about.

The greater part of the patriot troops employed against St. Leger had been marched off to oppose Burgoyne, whose invasion along the Hudson was destined to be equally unsuccessful with that upon the Mohawk. The fate of Major Greyslaer did not lead him to have a share in the glorious operations of Schuyler and Gates ; while the large force which had thus been withdrawn from the Valley of the Mohawk, rendering the utmost vigilance necessary in those who were left to guard it, made it impossible for an officer of his standing and importance to be absent on furlough at such a season.

As the autumn came on, he found himself posted at Fort Stanwix, where new works were to be erected to strengthen a frontier position which late events had proved to be so all important to the preservation of the province.

The winter set in, and his prospect of seeing Alida was still farther postponed. The spring arrived at last ; and what were the hopes it brought with its blossoms, when Greyslaer was about to avail himself at last of a long-promised furlough ?

The letters of Alida, meanwhile, had long breathed a spirit which filled him with anxiety. They had become more and more brief ; and, though not cold precisely, there was yet something formal in their tenour, as if their writer were gradually falling back upon the old terms of friendship which had so long been their only acknowledged relation of regard. It seemed as if some new and deeper sorrow had fixed upon her heart ; some weight of misery which even he could not remove. She did not complain ; she made no mention of any specific cause of grief, but she spoke as one whose hopes were no longer of this world.

At first Greyslaer thought that it was the death of her brother which had thus preyed upon her spirits ; and his replies to her letters bore the tenderest sympathy with her sorrows as he united in mourning over the early-closed career of his gallant and high-spirited friend. But, dearly as she loved Derrick, his name now was never mentioned by Alida ! Could it be that her health was failing ? Was the grave, then, about to yawn between Greyslaer and his hopes, to swallow them up for ever ? And did Alida wish thus gradually to wean him from the wild idolatry which had been the passion of his life ? to prepare him for the passing away of his idol ?

He thought, with terror, that it must be so. There was a tone of serious religious sentiment, a character of meekness and humility in some of her letters, wholly foreign to her once proud and fervid spirit. It was the tone of one who had ceased to struggle with and rebel against her lot ; who had yielded her spirit to the guidance of Him who gave it, and who waited in humble patience for the moment of its recall.

“ Yes,” said Greyslaer on the day that he was at last to be relieved from his military duties, as he read one of those passages in an agony of emotion, with which something of solace was still intermingled, “ yes, she feels herself fading into the grave. Consumption—yet Alida’s is not the soul to crumble beneath disease ! This new-born gentleness can only have been imparted from above. Her bright spirit is gathering from on high the only grace it lacked to fit it for that blessed sphere. She is fading—fading away from me for ever.” His eyes were strained on vacancy as he spoke, and he stood with arms wildly outstretched, as if to arrest some

beloved phantom which seemed melting before them.

The starting tears had scarcely filled those eyes, when a comrade, abruptly breaking into his quarters, told a tale which congealed them with horror where they stood. The whole nature of Max Greyslaer, the gentle, the high-minded, was changed within him from that very moment.

And what was the monstrous tale that wrought this change upon a mind so well attuned, a soul so steadfast, a heart so true in all that can approve its worth as was that of Greyslaer? Has fortune still a test in store to prove the love that never wavered? Has fate, from her black quiver, thrown a shaft that even love itself, in all its panoply, can not repel?

We are now approaching a part of our story that we would fain pass over as rapidly as possible, for the details are most painful; so painful, so revolting, in fact, that we cannot bring ourselves to do more than touch upon them while hurrying on to the catastrophe which they precipitated.

Walter Bradshawe, as we have seen, was convicted as a spy, and received sentence of death; but a mistaken lenity prompted his reprieve before the hour of execution arrived. When removed to Albany, he was at first closely imprisoned for several months; but the secret Tories, with which the capital of the province at that time abounded, found means of mitigating the rigours of his confinement, and even of enlisting a strong interest in his behalf among some of the most influential inhabitants. Bradshawe, before the Revolution, had mingled intimately in the society of the place, and his strongly-marked character had made both friends and enemies in the social circle. His present political situation increased the number of both, and both

were now equally active in the endeavour to preserve or crush him. The royalists, willing to keep politics entirely out of view, appealed only to private and personal feelings of old association in pleading for his safety. Some of the patriots sternly rejected all reference to a state of things which had passed away, and would see only a Tory malignant and detected spy in their former neighbour. But others accepted the issue which was offered by the friends of the criminal, and indignantly insisted that there was nothing in his private character which should make him a fit subject for mercy. The whole career of his life was ripped up from the time when, as a law student at Albany, he was known as one of the most riotous and reckless youths of the period—through the opening scenes of the Revolution, when his insolent and scandalous conduct, on more than one occasion, had exasperated the minds of men against the official profligate—through those which followed the outbreak of civil discord, when his aid or connivance was more than suspected to many a deed of ruthless violence, of midnight burning, of bloodshed and cruelty—down to the present time, when he stood a convicted criminal, whose life had been most justly forfeited.

Men stop at nothing when their minds are once excited in times so phrensied as these; and the whole story of the abduction of Miss De Roos was brought up as testimony against Bradshawe's character, with every particular exaggerated, and the outrage painted in every colour which could inspire horror at its enormity.

Rumours of Greyslaer's approaching nuptials with the unhappy lady who was thus made the general subject of conversation, reached the ears of Bradshawe while chafing beneath these charges, and the thought of the misery they would inflict

upon his victims might have been sufficient even for his revengeful spirit; but he determined, with a hellish ingenuity, to fling the imputation of the outrage from himself, and, at the same time, to plant its stigma in an exaggerated form upon her whose name had been so recklessly dragged in by his persecutors. He first set afloat insinuations in regard to the parentage of the half-blood Indian boy who had long been an inmate of the family at the Hawk-nest, and who had more than once visited Albany under the care of Alida, whom the child so much resembled! And then he boldly proclaimed, that, so far from instituting the alleged abduction of Miss De Roos, he had only, out of respect for her connexions, aided in withdrawing her from the protection of Isaac Brant, to whom she had fled from her father's halls!

A conviction of the nature of the feelings, the tortured and blasted feelings which had prompted the tone of Alida's letters, flashed electric upon the mind of her lover at this horrid recital; and at thought of that lady, most deject and wretched, his noble and most sovereign reason—to which religion had ever been the handmaid—was quite o'erthrown: "The soldier's, scholar's eye, tongue, sword, quite—quite down."

In a word, Max Greyslaer, as we have already said—Max, the gentle, the high-minded, became changed in soul on the instant. The prayerful spirit of one short hour ago vanished before the new divinity that usurped its place upon the altar of his heart. His dream of submission to the will of Providence—the tearful resignation which his belief in Alida's illness inspired, was over, lost, swallowed up, obliterated in the wild tempest of his passions. The fierce lust of vengeance shot through his veins and agitated every fibre of his system; a horrid

craving seized his heart—the craving for the blood of a human victim! And had Bradshawe stood near, gifted with a hundred lives, Greyslaer could one by one have torn them all from out his mortal frame.

The object of his vengeance was far away, but Max Greyslaer from that moment was not less in thought—a MURDERER!

CHAPTER VIII.

THE AVENGER'S JOURNEY.

"His face was calmly stern, and but a glare
Within his eyes—there was no feature there
That told what lashing fiends his inmates were
Within—there was no thought to bid him swerve
From his intent ; but every strained nerve
Was settled and bent up with terrible force
To some deep deed far, far beyond remorse ;
No glimpse of mercy's light his purpose cross'd,
Love, nature, pity, in its depths were lost ;
Or lent an added fury to the ire
That seared his soul with unconsuming fire."—DRAKE.

AN acute observer of human nature has remarked, that there are seasons when a man differs not less from himself than he does at other times from all other men ; and certain it is that passion will often, with the magic of a moment, work a change in the character which the blind pressure of circumstance throughout long years—the moulding habits of an ordinary lifetime, with all their plastic power above the human heart, could never have wrought in the same individual who undergoes this sudden transformation.

An hour had passed away with Greyslaer ; an hour of phrensied feeling. And one such hour is enough, with a man of deep, intense, and concentrated feelings, for the gust of passion to subside into the stern calmness of resolve. The soldier who was sent to summon him to the mess-table reported that Major Greyslaer's quarters were vacant. The soldier had passed the major's servant on his way thither to pack up and put away his things, as

if his master were likely to be long absent. The servant himself came the next moment to say, that his master, being suddenly called away from the post, would not dine with the mess that day. His brother officers, though knowing that their popular comrade had lately received a long-expected furlough, were still surprised at this abrupt departure ; and one or two of them left their seats and hurried out to the stables. Greyslaer stood there with a cloak and valise over his arm, superintending in person the equipment of his horse for a long journey. His cheek was pale, his eye looked sunken, and his aspect altogether was that of one who had for the first time ventured forth after a long and serious illness ; yet there was no fever about his eyes ; they were rather, indeed, dull, cold, and glassy.

The officers, who simultaneously uttered a cry of surprise at the strange alteration in the appearance of their friend since the morning, were—they hardly knew why—instantly silenced by Greyslaer's manner as he turned round to answer their salutation. They had come there, impelled by motives of friendly curiosity, to ask why he broke away so suddenly from their society. They now stood as if they had forgotten their errand ; mute lookers-on, whom some mysterious influence withheld from expressing their emotions even by a sympathetic glance with each other. When all was ready, Greyslaer threw himself into the saddle, murmured something about his having already taken his leave of the colonel, and, as the two officers thought they remembered afterward, left some words of kind farewell for others of the mess. But the ghastly appearance of Greyslaer, the icy coldness of the hand he gave them to shake, and his strangely unnatural and statue-like appearance as he slowly moved off unattended, struck a chilling amazement into the hearts

of his friends, that left them perfectly stupified for the moment. They had broken away from the table to take a cordial farewell of one whose generous, soldierly temperament, not less than his brilliant social qualities, had made him the pride and delight of the mess. The marble figure with which they but now parted wore, indeed, the lineaments of their friend, but was a perfect stranger to their hearts. The very voice, they swore, never did belong to Max Greyslaer. As for the soldiers, many of whom were recruited from among the superstitious Scotch and German settlers of the neighbouring mountains, they fully believed that some evil spirit of the heathenish Indians had wrought this sudden and mysterious change in the whole look and bearing of their favourite officer; and, alas! it was but too true that the direst of pagan deities had taken up her abode in the heart of Max Greyslaer.

In the mean time, the horseman, who furnished so earnest a theme for those whom he had left behind, slowly but steadily pursued his journey. His horse, from the regular, mechanical gait he adopted, seemed to know that a long road was before him. The patient roadster and his motionless rider were long seen from the battlements of Fort Stanwix, though the evening shadows of the adjacent woods snatched them more than once from view before they finally glided like an apparition into the silent forest.

There was no moon, but the stars shone brightly above him as Greyslaer crossed the fatal field of Oriskany. His horse snuffing the air, which, in the warm, moist night of teeming springtime, stole out from the tainted earth, first reminded him of the scene of slaughter over which he was riding. He passed the tree beneath which the remains of De Roos had been laid. He did not shudder. He gave

no tear to the recollection of the past ; neither did one thought arise to rebuke the memory of his early friend for present sorrows. He did not even envy him the repose of his woodland grave. He only looked coldly upon the spot as a mere landmark of Fate, where one breathing being, warm with life and intelligence, had found his allotted bourne ; and why ponder upon a doom common to all—fixed, predetermined, and to which he himself, as he believed, was then moving at such a cold, passionless pace ?

It was long after midnight before Greyslaer halted, and it was then only for the purpose of refreshing his horse. The dawn found him again upon his journey, and, by changing his steed for a fresher one, he reached the Hawksnest before evening. His original determination led him direct to Albany, where Bradshawe was still under durance ; but when he found himself in the neighbourhood of his homestead, and obliged to halt for a few hours from the impossibility of getting another relay, he felt himself irresistibly prompted to make a secret visit to the premises. He did not intend to have an interview with Alida, but he must look upon the house which held her.

He approached the domain, and all was silent. It was too early yet, perhaps, for lights to show through the casement ; but, if there had been any there, Greyslaer could not have seen them, for every shutter seemed closed. There was no smoke from the chimneys, around which the swallows clustered, as huddling there to an unmolested roost. Max had never seen the home of his fathers look so desolate. With quickening pace he advanced to the hall door and tried the latch ; but in vain, for the bolts had been drawn within. He knocked, and the sound came hollowly to his ears, as we always fancy it

does from an untenanted mansion. He walked to the end of the verandah, and, glancing rapidly round among the outhouses, which stood off at one wing of the main building, observed some poultry at roost among a cluster of pear and locust trees which nearly encircled the kitchen. Their presence suggested him to apply to the only spot where these feathered dependants could now look for their food. He approached the kitchen—a small, Dutch-built building of brick—and rapped against the window before trying the door. A gray-headed negress, protruding her head through a narrow window in one of the gables, at length greeted his ears with the sound of a human voice.

“Who’s dere?” she cried, in a quick tone of alarm.

“It is I—Master Max, Dinah.”

“Lorrah massy, be’t you for sartain, or only your spook?”

“No spook, my good Dinah, but my living self. Come down and let me in.”

“Me mighty glad to see you, massy,” said the negress, lighting a candle, after she had unbolted the door to Greyslaer; “for Dinah go to bed when they leib her all alone, so that she not see the spook. But, Lorrah, Mass Max, how berry old he look. He pale, too, as spook,” added the slave, shading the candle partly with her hand as she peered into her young master’s features.

“But where are all my people? Where is Miss—”

“De boys—all de boys, massy, has gone to de village to hold corn-dance for seedtime. De house-keeper, you know, lib at de oberseer’s down in the lane eber since she shut up the great house after Miss Alida went away.”

“And where has Miss Alida gone?” said Greys-

laer, with unnatural calmness, as he caught hold of the back of a chair to steady himself ; for, of a truth, he for a moment feared that Alida, stung to madness by the cruel nature of her sorrows, might have hurried upon some tragic fate, he scarcely knew what.

The answer of the old servant took an instant load from his bosom. Miss Alida, she said, had taken the little boy with her and gone to Albany near a month since. "She grew thin and looked mighty sorrowful before she went, and it made our hearts bleed to see her, Mass Max," said the faithful black ; "and, though we were all cast down like when we saw her pack up her things to go away, yet we thought it might be better for young missus to go where there were more white folks to cheer her up."

Greyslaer made no answer, but, asking for the key of the house, lighted a stable-lantern, and telling Dinah that he should not want her attendance, entered the deserted house. He gained the parlour, which had beheld the last ill-omened parting of the lovers, so sad yet so sweet withal. The room looked much the same as when last he left it, save that there were no fresh-gathered flowers upon the mantelpiece, and some few slight articles belonging to Alida had been removed. He placed the lantern upon a table and opened its door ; for the flickering light, dancing upon one or two portraits with which the walls were hung, gave them a sort of fitful life that was annoying. He wished to realize fully that he was alone. He looked around to see if there were no memento or trace of the last hours which Alida had passed in the same chamber. A little shawl, thrown carelessly across the arm of a sofa, met his eye. He took it up, looked at it, and knew it to be Alida's. It had probably been flung there

and forgotten in the hasty moment of departure. Greyslaer had never been what, in modern parlance, is called "a lady's man;" and though he could sometimes tell one article of dress from another, he was wholly unskilled in the effeminate knowledge and toilet-like arts which distinguish that enviable class of our sex. It was curious, therefore, to see him stand and fold this scarf with the utmost nicety and neatness. He handled it, indeed, like something precious; and, from the delicacy with which he pressed it to his lips before placing it in his bosom, he seemed to imagine the senseless fabric imbued with life; but all his motions now were like those of one who moves in a dream.

At last he took up the lantern to retire from the apartment, so desolate in itself, yet peopled with so many haunting memories. A letter, which had been unobserved when he placed it there, lay beneath it. Max read the superscription. It was addressed to himself, and in the handwriting of Alida. He broke the seal, and read as follows:

"You will probably, before reading this, have surmised the cause why I have withdrawn from beneath a roof which has never sheltered dishonour. Oh! my friend—if so the wretched Alida may still call you—you cannot dream of what I have suffered while delaying the execution of a step which I believe to be due alike to you and to myself; but the state of my health would not sooner admit of putting my determination in execution, and I knew there would be full time for me to retire before you could come back to assume the government of your household. That determination is never to see you more. Yes, Greyslaer, we are parted, and for ever.....The meshes of villany which have been woven around me it is impossible to disentangle.

My woman's name is blasted beyond all hope of retrieval, and yours shall never be involved in its disgrace. I ask you not to believe me innocent. I have no plea, no proof to offer. I submit to the chastening hand of Providence. I make no appeal to the love whose tried and generous offices might mitigate this dreadful visitation. I would have you think of me and my miserable concerns no more. God bless you, Max! God bless and keep you; keep you from the devices of a proud and arrogant spirit, which Heaven, in its wisdom, hath so severely scourged in me; keep you from that bitterest of all reflections, the awful conviction that your rebellious heart has fully merited the severest judgments of its Maker. God bless and keep you, dearest, dearest Max.

“A. D. R.”

The features of Greyslaer betrayed no emotion as he read this letter the first, the second, and even the third time, for thrice did he peruse it before he became fully master of its contents; and even then, from the vacant gaze which he fixed upon its characters, it would seem as if his mind were by no means earnestly occupied with what it contained. He laid it down upon the table, paced to and fro leisurely through the chamber, paused, took up some trivial article from the mantelpiece, examined it, and replaced it as carefully as if his thoughts were intent only upon the trifles of the moment. He returned to the table, took up the letter, and slightly shivering as he came to the close of it, turned his eyes upward, while the paper, which he held at arm's length, trembled in his hands as if he were suddenly seized with an ague-fit. “God of heaven!” he cried, “I cannot, I dare not pray; yet thou only—” he paused, and shuddered still more fright-

fully, as his lips seemed almost unwittingly about to syllable the prayerful thoughts which, rising from a heart tenanted as his was by a *murderer's vow*, would be a mockery, an insult to Heaven. Tears—the first resource of woman, the last relief of man—burst that moment from his eyes, and alleviated a struggle so powerful as to threaten instant madness to its half-convulsed subject. The sufferer buried his face in his hands, and, throwing himself on the sofa, wept long and passionately. Let no man sneer at his weakness, unless he has once loved as did Greyslaer; unless that love has been blasted as his was; unless he has felt himself the victim of an iron destiny, when the heart, softened by years of unchanging tenderness, was least fitted to bear up under the doom to which he must yield! Greyslaer knew the singular firmness, the inflexible determination of Alida's character. He believed, as she did, that it was now impossible to wipe away the reproach that attached to her name. She had declared her resolution. He felt that he would see her no more.

And was there, then, it may be asked, no doubt in the mind of Max, no shadowy but still poignant doubt, no latent and subtle suspicion of the truth of his mistress? No momentary weighing of testimony as to what might be the real circumstances of Alida's story?

Not one! ever—for a moment—not one disloyal thought to the majesty of her virtue; not one blaspheming doubt to the holiness of her truth; no, never—never, for the breath of an instant, had an unhallowed suspicion of Alida's maiden purity crossed the mind of her lover! Greyslaer himself was all truth and nobleness! How could so mean and miserable a thought have found entrance into a soul like his, regarding one as high-strung as itself, and

with which it had once mingled in full and rich accord ? Besides, the love of a feeling and meditative mind ; the love that, born in youth, survives through the perilous trials of early manhood, with all the warm yet holy flush of its dawn tincturing its fondness, and all the soberer and fuller light of its noontide testing without impairing its esteem—such a love becomes as much a part of a man's nature, mingles as intimately with his being, as the very life-blood that channels through his veins ; and to doubt the purity of her who inspires it were as deathful as to admit a poison into the vital fluids of his system. Such love may languish in hopelessness, may wither in despair, may die at last—like the winter-starved bird of Indian fable, who melted into a song, which, they say, is still sometimes heard in his accustomed haunts—but it never can admit one moment's doubt of the worthiness of its object.

The gush of passionate emotion to which the unhappy Max had abandoned himself, had at last its end. And as these were the first tears which he had shed in years—for his phrensied ravings in the hour when he first received the cruel blow to his happiness had had no such relief—they were followed by a calmness of mind far more natural than that which he had recently known. Even the old negress, who had sat up watching for him, pipe in mouth, by the kitchen-fire, where she had raked a few embers together, could not but observe the difference in his appearance while commenting upon the fixed air of sadness which her young master still wore. Greyslaer, who, even at such a time, was not forgetful of the humble dependants upon his bounty, handed the old woman a few shillings to replenish her store of tobacco, the only luxury left to her age and infirmity ; and, leaving a trifle or two for the other servants, took a kind leave of old

Dinah, and returned to the inn where he had left his horse. The gray of the morning found him once more upon the road; and before sunset the spires of Schenectady, the last village he was to pass through before reaching Albany, rose to his view. But we must now leave him to look after other personages of our story.

CHAPTER IX.

THE NIGHT ATTEMPT.

"This rope secures the boat. Be still,
"though sounds should rise the heart to chill—
If coming feet should meet thine ear,
And I am silent, do not fear ;
For I've another task in view."—J. K. MITCHELL.

WALTER BRADSHAW, whose long incarceration at Albany has been already commemorated, had, through the intercession of friends and the clemency of those in power, been transferred from the common jail of the town where he was first imprisoned, to a sort of honorary durance in the guarded chamber of an ordinary dwelling-house.

The building in which he was now confined was situated near the water-side, in the upper part of the town, having a garden in the rear running down to the quay. The room appropriated to Bradshawe was in the second story, at the back of the house, and immediately at the head of the first flight of stairs. At the foot of this staircase, and within a few yards of the outer door, which opened upon the street, was posted a sentinel.

As month after month flew by, and still greater indulgences were granted to Bradshawe with the prolongation of his imprisonment, the duty of this sentinel became at last so much a matter of mere form, that it was customary often to place a new recruit with a musket in his hands in the place which was, in the first instance, occupied by some veteran soldier of trust and confidence. This relaxation of vigilance was, of course, not unobserved by the

friends of the prisoner, if, in fact, it was not procured by their agency ; and, upon intelligence being conveyed to Valtmeyer how things were situated, he immediately planned the escape of Bradshawe, and selected a shrewd and trusty follower (an old acquaintance of the reader) to assist him in the project.

Syl Stickney, therefore, according to previous arrangement, succeeded in making his way into the city of Albany in the guise of a Helderberg peasant ; and, after lounging about the streets for a few days, he allowed himself to be picked up by a sergeant's patrol, and carried to a recruiting station, where, without much difficulty, he was persuaded to enlist in the patriot army. Valtmeyer, in the mean time, hovered around the outskirts of the town, and was advised of all Stickney's movements through the agency of several disaffected persons of condition, who, though in secret among the most active partisans of the royal cause, still kept up appearances sufficiently to enjoy an easy position in society, and who had almost daily access to the prisoner upon the mere footing of fashionable acquaintance.

Many days had not passed before the Helderberg recruit was placed as sentinel before the door of Bradshawe's quarters, and it was easily ascertained when his tour of duty would come round a second time. Valtmeyer was on the alert to avail himself of the opportunity.

Entering the city of Albany by the southern suburbs, this daring partisan succeeded one night in throwing himself, with a party of followers as desperate as himself, into a stable which stood near the edge of the river, where they lay concealed in the hayloft through the whole of the following day. With the approach of the next evening—the time

fixed upon for the proposed rescue—a canoe, paddled by a single negro, crept along the bank of the river from the islands below, and was moored within a few yards of the stable. This canoe was appropriated to the escape of Bradshawe; but the plotting brain of Valtmeyer, which could not remain idle during the long hours that he was obliged to lie quiet in his lurking-place, contrived a still farther use for it.

The stable in which he chanced to have taken post was situate at the foot of a garden upon the premises occupied by a zealous Whig, and one of the most efficient members of the Albany Council of Safety, being a man, indeed, whose firmness, vigilance, and unwearied activity in the Whig cause made him second only to General Schuyler among the most valuable citizens of Albany in those times. Mr. Taylor—for that energetic Revolutionary partisan and subsequently distinguished civilian was the person in question—was particularly obnoxious to the Johnson family for the part he had acted in expelling some of its members from the province; and the daring genius of Valtmeyer kindled with the idea of conveying him off a captive to Sir John. In fact, though the success of Bradshawe's escape must be endangered by connecting it with such an attempt, yet Valtmeyer, when, from his lurking-place, he several times throughout the day caught sight of the Whig councillor moving about, unconscious of danger, over his own grounds, could not resist the temptation.

The famous Joe Bettys, who had associated himself with this expedition, did his best to dissuade his daring comrade from this project until they got the head of Bradshawe fairly out of the lion's mouth; but Valtmeyer insisted that no time was so fit as the present; for, the moment that Bradshawe was missed, such precautions would be taken that they

could not venture into so perilous a neighbourhood again. He knew, he said, that Bradshawe would damn him if he let such a chance go by. It was agreed, therefore, that Bettys should go alone to guide Bradshawe down to the boat, where Valtmeyer promised that he would meet him with his prisoner when the turning of the tide should enable them to drop down the stream most easily.

The attempt to seize Mr. Taylor—as we know from the annals of the period—failed through one of those incidents which, seeming so trivial in themselves, are still so important in their consequences that they cannot but be considered providential. But the results of that failure are most intimately connected with the course of our story.

The clock of the old Dutch church, which stood in the centre of State-street, struck the hour of midnight when Bettys departed to attend to his share in the perilous operations of the night. Leaving him, for the present, to make his way to the quarters of Bradshawe, we must in the mean while attend to the proceedings of his brother brigand.

It was the intention of Valtmeyer to effect an entrance into Mr. Taylor's house with as little disturbance as possible, and to seize and bear away the master of the household to the canoe at the foot of his garden. But, though the family had, from appearances, already retired for the night, he meant to defer the attempt until Bettys had made good his retreat to the water-side with Bradshawe. It chanced, however, that scarcely ten minutes after Bettys had left his comrades, their attention was excited by a noise at the door in the rear of the house which precipitated their movements.

A chain falling, the clanging of an iron bar, and the grating of a heavy bolt as it was withdrawn, showed that the only door through which they could hope for ingress was guarded and secured by pre-

cautions which, though not unusual in private buildings at that period, seem not to have been anticipated by Valtmeyer in the present instance. There was evidently some one about to come out into the yard. Valtmeyer hoped that it might be the councillor himself; if not, he determined, in any event, that the occasion must not be lost of effecting an entrance through the open door.

Age or caution seemed to make the forthcoming person very slow in his movements; but the door moved at last upon its hinges, and the dull light of a stable lantern falling across the threshold, revealed only the form of an old black servant, who, with creeping step, was moving forward into the yard.

The Tories, thinking the moment for action had arrived, sprang impetuously forward to seize the negro. But, though the sudden rush had nearly effected their object, the movement was premature; for the negro, startled at the first noise of their onset, dropped his lantern, scuttled back across the threshold, and shot the bolt of the door just as the foremost assailant reached it. Valtmeyer gnashed his teeth with rage as he heard the faithful fellow tugging at the chain and bar, still farther to secure it within, while his cries at the same time summoned the family to his aid. The next moment there came a pistol-shot from a window; and the Tories, seeing now that the whole neighbourhood would be alarmed, retreated to the boat as rapidly as possible.

The canoe was easily gained; but now what to do in the predicament in which he had placed himself, puzzled even the fertile brain of Valtmeyer. To remain where he was, exposed all his party to seizure, for the whole town must be alarmed in a very few moments; yet to depart at once must jeopard, fatally perhaps, the lives of both Bradshawe and Bettys, not to mention that of the false sentinel, who, it was supposed, would come off with

them. Valtmeyer did not hesitate long; and his decision, though attended with no benefit to his absent allies, was still the best that could be made in the premises. He determined to lighten his canoe, and, at the same time, effect a diversion in case of pursuit, by sending all his followers, save himself, to make their retreat along the river's bank by land, in the same way they had entered the town. He then, with wary paddle, commenced creeping along shore up the river, so as to approach the place of Bradshawe's confinement, which was toward the other extremity of the town.

Let us now follow the doughty Joe Bettys upon his mission.

The duty of this worthy confrere of Valtmeyer, though perilous, was sufficiently plain. He had only to ascertain that the Tory sentinel was at his post, and make him aware that he himself was near, when Bradshawe, who knew the minutest arrangement of the plot for his relief, would at once emerge from his quarters and follow Bettys' guidance. Their first movement would be to make for the river; for there lay their means of escape, and there the piles of timber, of which Albany was ever a great mart, afforded the best opportunity for present concealment, if it should be necessary.

And thus, indeed, every circumstance, like those of a well-rehearsed play, might have succeeded each other, were it not for the intrusion of a most unexpected actor upon the scene.

The first intimation which Bettys had of such interference was from the stupid exclamation of surprise which his appearance drew from the disguised sentinel as he encountered him upon entering the hall. Stickney, who might have just awakened from a nap upon a bench which stood near, was supporting his staggering limbs against the ban-

nister, and seemed to be listening, half awake, to some noise in the room at the head of the stairs. Upon the entrance of Bettys, he turned round sharply, and, catching at his musket, which leaned against the wall, seemed disposed to dispute the passage with him.

"Softly, Syl," cried the wary Joe ; "you needn't act the drunken man so far as to run me through by mistake. Why, zounds ! the infernal rascal's dead-drunk in earnest ; sewed up completely, by—," he added, with an angry oath, as he advanced and collared him.

"Aint in liquor—more—than—my—duty—requires," hiccoughed Sylla ; "for didn't I see—you—with my—eyes—shut—come in that door and go up stairs—but ten minutes—ago ?"

"Me—me, you lying, drunken rascal ! Saw me ? Answer quickly, or I'll shake the life out of you."

"If I didn't, may I never—touch—a drop of good liquor again. By Goy !" ejaculated Stickney, finishing his asseverations with a stupid stare, "I believe I am drunk ; for, if this be raally Leftenant Joe Bettys, I've seen double at least once to-night. The fellow that went up stairs—"

Bettys waited to hear no more, but hurled his sottish follower from him with a force that sent him reeling to the farther end of the hall. The noise the man made in falling brought the owner of the mansion instantly to his door ; but he only opened it far enough to thrust out his head, and cast a furtive and anxious glance at Bettys as the latter rushed up the stairs, when, seeming to think for the moment that all was right, he drew back and locked his apartment. And we too must now leave Bettys upon the threshold of Bradshawe's room, to look after another of those who were most deeply concerned in the deeds of this eventful night.

CHAPTER X.

THE RENCONTRE.

“ Ay, curse him—but keep
The poor boon of his breath
Till he sigh for the sleep
And the quiet of death !
Let a viewless one haunt him
With whisper and jeer,
And an evil one daunt him
With phantoms of fear.”—WHITTIER.

It chanced, then, that, in the very hour appointed for carrying into execution the bold project which we have thus far traced, that Max Greyslaer, bent on his errand of murderous vengeance, entered the city of Albany by the Schenectady road, and, leaving his horse at a wagoner's inn in the suburbs, penetrated on foot into the heart of the town. He had possessed himself, while at Schenectady, of every particular relating to the place of Bradshawe's imprisonment, and of the nature of the guard that was kept over him ; and, fevered with impatience to accomplish the one fatal object which had brought him hither, he proceeded at once to reconnoitre the prisoner's quarters. Greyslaer, in all his movements that night, acted like one who is impelled in a dream by some resistless power within him ; and he *was* spellbound—if the icy wand of demon passion hath aught in it of magic power above the human heart.

He approached the house, and discovered, by the glimmer of a dull lamp within the entry, that the street door was ajar. He reached the door itself, and, opening it still farther with a cautious hand, beheld the sentinel stretched upon a bench in the

hall, and snoring so obstreperously, that, if his slumbers were not feigned, they must be the effect of deep intoxication. An empty flagon, which lay on the floor just where it had rolled from the drunken hand of the sleeper, seemed sufficiently to prove that the latter must be the case ; and, indeed, we may here mention, in passing, that Stickney, who played the part of the Helderberg recruit so successfully, subsequently escaped the extreme penalty of military law by pleading that his neglect of duty arose from intoxication produced by a drugged mixture administered by the family upon which the prisoner and his sentinel were alike quartered—their real connivance in the escape of Bradshawe being known only to Stickney's superiors.

Greyslaer paused a moment to discover if there were no greater obstacle to his ingress to the premises than those which had hitherto presented themselves. Suddenly he heard a step in the room nearest to the street door ; it showed that the family which occupied the lower floor of the house had not yet retired. Greyslaer startled slightly (did the guilty soul of a murderer make him thus tremulous ?), and, turning round at the noise, the scabbard of his sword rattled against the bench whereon reposed the sleeping soldier. A light flashed momentarily through the keyhole of the door opposite ; and then, as it was straightway extinguished, all became still as before.

Had Max's mind not been wholly preoccupied by one subject, his suspicions must now have been fully aroused, that the occupants of the mansion were quietly colluding in the escape of the prisoner. But now he has ascended the staircase, and, pausing yet a moment to loosen his rapier in its sheath, he gives a low tap at the door of the room in which Bradshawe is quartered.

“ Enter, my trusty Joseph, most adroit and com-

mendable of burglars," said Bradshawe, scarcely looking up from the table at which he was writing by the fickle light of a shabby taper. "Hold on but a single instant, Bettys," he continued; "I am only scratching off some lines to exculpate my worthy host from any share in this night's business, in case the wise rebels should think fit to seize him. There, 'Walter Bradshawe,' that signature will be worth something to an autograph-hunter some of these days; and now—"

"And *now*," echoed a voice near him, in tones so freezing that even the heart of Bradshawe was chilled within him at the sound; "and now prepare yourself for a miscreant's death upon this very instant."

Bradshawe looked up in stupified amazement.

"Do you know me, Walter Bradshawe?" cried Greyslaer, raising his hat from his brow, and making a stride toward the table.

"We're blown, by G—d!" ejaculated the captive Tory. "Know you? to be sure I do. You're the rebel Greyslaer, who, having got wind of this night's attempt, have come mousing here after farther evidence to hang me. But you'll find it devilish hard to prove that I meant to abuse the clemency of Lafayette," added the prisoner, tearing to pieces the note he had just written.

"I come on no such business," said Greyslaer, smiling bitterly. "I come—"

"And if you are not here in an official capacity, sir, how dare you intrude into my private chambers?" cried Bradshawe, springing to his feet and confronting Max with a look of brutal insolence.

"Bradshawe, you cannot distemper me by such tone of insult. Your own heart must suggest the errand which brought me hither." (The countenance of Bradshawe for the first time fell.) "I

might have slain you as I entered ; murdered you as you sat but now with your eyes bent upon the paper that you have since torn ; but my vengeance were incomplete, unless you know by whose hand you fall."

The passionless, icy tone in which Greyslaer spoke, seemed to unnerve even the iron heart of Bradshawe. He tried to return the steadfast gaze of that fixed and glassy eye, but his glances involuntarily wandered, his cheek grew pale, his soul wilted before the marble looks of his mortal foe. "He must have the strength as well as the look of a maniac," he murmured, catching at the back of a chair which stood near him—whether to seize it as a weapon of defence or merely to steady himself by its support, we know not. But Max seemed to put the last construction upon the act, as, with a discordant laugh, he cried,

"Aha! he shrinks then, this truculent scoundrel—"

"I'm unarmed, I'm defenceless—a prisoner. If it's satisfaction you seek of me, Major Greyslaer—" cried Bradshawe, hurriedly, as, holding the chair before him, he backed toward a corner of the apartment.

"Satisfaction?" thundered Max, interrupting the appeal by springing furiously across the room. The strength of Bradshawe seemed to wither beneath the touch of the icy fingers that were instantly planted in his throat. "Damn you, sir—damn you, what satisfaction can *you* make to man—to God, for driving me to an accursed deed like—this?"

His sword leaped from its scabbard as he spoke, and Bradshawe involuntarily closed his eyes as the gleaming blade seemed about to be sheathed in his bosom.

But suddenly the hand of Greyslaer is arrested by an iron grip from behind ; he turns to confront the as-

sailant who has thus seized him, when Bradshawe, quickly recovering himself, deals a blow with the chair—of which he has not yet released his hold—a blow that brings Greyslaer instantly to the ground. Wounded, but not stunned, Max quickly regains his feet, and makes a pass at the intruder, which only inflicts a slight flesh wound, but not before Bradshawe has thrown open a window, through which, followed by Bettys, he leaps upon a shed and drops into the garden below. Greyslaer hesitates not to follow; but the mutual assistance which the fugitives render each other enables them to scale the garden-wall more quickly than their pursuer, and their receding forms are swallowed up in the surrounding darkness before Greyslaer has gained the quay to which they have retreated.

The reviving air of night, the inspiriting consciousness of freedom after so long incarceration, brought back at once to Bradshawe his wonted energy and hardihood of character; and when Bettys provided him with a weapon to use in any extremity to which they might be reduced in accomplishing the final steps of their escape, the bold Tory could scarcely resist the impulse to turn back and take signal vengeance upon the man who had momentarily humbled his haughty spirit; but every instant was precious, and the fugitives paused not in making their way to the point where they expected to find Valtmeyer's boat waiting them.

They followed down the water's edge nearly to State-street, as it is now called, and must have been within a few hundred yards of the canoe—for the garden of Mr. Taylor, near which it was moored, lay close upon the south side of this broad avenue—when suddenly the report of a pistol fired from the house arrests their steps.

They falter and turn back. Bradshawe, hurriedly telling his companion to leave him to his fate, turns

the angle of a street, and strikes up from the river toward the heart of the town. He approaches Market-street, which runs parallel with the Hudson, and, hearing the tramp of an armed patrol upon its sidewalks, conceals himself behind a bale of merchandise, which affords the only shelter near. It seems an age before the city guard has passed by ; and Bettys, who, in the mean time, has thriddled the piles of staves and lumber upon the quay, and visited the place where he expected to find the canoe, returns to Bradshawe's side just as the patrol has passed the head of the street, and whispers that the boat is gone. Not an instant is to be lost if they would now make their way to the suburbs, through which is their only hope of escape into the open country beyond. They cross Market-street—though at the widest part—fly up the dark and narrow passage of Maiden Lane, and gain the outskirts of the town near the top of the hill, where the old jail, till within a few years, stood frowning. The sight of the grated cells in which he had been immured for so many long months, lends new life to the exertions of Bradshawe ; and, with the agile Bettys, he soon reaches the nodding forests, which at that time still in broad patches crowned the heights in the rear of the ancient city of Albany.

Let us now return to Greyslaer, whom we left groping his way among the midnight shadows upon the river's bank when the fugitives escaped from his pursuit, and flitted along the water-side while he was scaling the walls of the garden.

The escape of Bradshawe, under all the circumstances which attended his imprisonment, wrought up his pursuer to a pitch of phrensy that completely bewildered him. It was not merely that he was thus foiled in his meditated vengeance on the instant when the cruel slanderer of Alida seemed placed by fate completely in his hands, but the idea that

Bradshawe should make good his retreat within the lines of the royalists, and thus triumphantly leave the stigma which he had planted to work its dire consequences, when he himself was secure and far away from his victims, made Greyslaer frantic; and Max, scarce knowing whither he hurried or what he could hope for in his wild pursuit, darted hither and thither amid the labyrinth of lumber which was heaped up along the busy quays of Albany.

Now it chanced that, at the very moment that Bettys was, with whispered curses, deploring to Bradshawe the absence of the canoe, upon which the safety of all seemed to depend, Valtmeyer, whom the intervening piles of boards upon the shore had alone screened from the view of Bettys, was stealthily guiding around the head of the pier at the foot of the street where the two fugitives had halted until the patrol should pass by. The outlaw, too, as well as they, heard the tramp of armed men in the silent streets of the city; and, pausing for a moment until the sounds of alarm swept farther toward the northern part of the town, he plied his paddle with fresh industry until he could run his shallop into a slip or dock near the foot of the garden where Max had first lost sight of the fugitives. Here he landed, in the hope of still being in time to prevent Bradshawe and his comrade from seeking the boat at a point farther down the quay, and taking them off from the shore the moment they should make good their escape from the rear of the house.

In the mean time, the darkness of the night, and the other obstructions to pursuit already mentioned, soon cut short the frantic search of Greyslaer, who, emerging from the heavy shadows of the place, thought that he again had caught sight of the fugi-

tives as Valtmeyer suddenly confronted him in his path.

"Dunder und blixem, capting, I was afeard you were a gone coon, and was on the point of shoving off without you. Where's Bettys? We must be off in haste! A rebel *luder!*" he exclaimed, as Max sprang forward and attempted to collar him. "Der Henker schlag heinen! The hangman strikes in it, but Red Wolfert's rope is not yet spun."

And, muttering thus, the giant, quick as light, shook off the grasp of the young officer, and, leaping backward a pace or two, presented a pistol at his head.

"Miss me, you scoundrel, and your fate is certain," cried the undaunted Max; but Valtmeyer had no idea of farther compromising the escape of himself and his friends by the report of arms at such a moment; and, seeing that the attempt to awe his foeman into silence had failed, he drew his hanger and rushed upon Greyslaer; the sword of Max was already out, and the ruffian strength of Valtmeyer found an admirable match in the skill, the steadiness, and alertness of movement of his opponent, though the darkness amid which they fought deprived Greyslaer of much of his superiority as a fencer.

Thrice did the outlaw attempt, by beating down the guard of his opponent, to fling his huge form upon Max and bear him to the earth; and thrice did the sword of Greyslaer drink the blood of the brawny borderer as he thus essayed a death-grapple with his slender foe.

And now Greyslaer, who has hitherto yielded ground before the furious onslaught of the other, begins to press him backward foot by foot, until the edge of the quay, upon which Valtmeyer stands, permits him to retreat no farther. He grinds his outlandish oaths more savagely between his teeth

as he feels his life-blood failing him, and, conscious that his hour has come, seems bent alone upon bearing his gallant foeman with him to destruction. He hears the sullen dashing of the waves at his feet, and glares furtively around, whether from now first realizing the double danger near, or to distract for a moment the attention of his antagonist, it matters not; for now, quickly dropping his weapon, he springs forward and clutches Max in his arms in the same moment that a final thrust passes through his own body. The wound is mortal, but still the bold outlaw struggles. He has borne his foeman to the ground, and, pierced through as he is, with the steel still quivering in his vitals, he flounders with his grappled burden toward the water's edge. The life of Greyslaer hangs upon a hair, as, with knee planted against the breast of Valtmeyer and one hand at his throat, he clings with the other to the topmost timber of the pier; when, suddenly, the mortal grip of the dying ruffian is relaxed. There is a heavy plashing in the dark-rolling river, and now its current sweeps away the gory corse of Valtmeyer.

But the perils of this eventful night were not yet over for Max Greyslaer.

The town, as we have already noted, had been alarmed by the scene near Mr. Taylor's premises, and the streets were now patrolled in every direction, either by a military guard or by the bold burghers, who rushed armed from their houses at the first sound of danger. Amid the excitement of a fight so desperate, neither Max nor his redoubted foe had noticed the turmoil that was rising near. But the clashing of their swords had not escaped the ears of the patrol, who hurried toward the spot whence came the sounds just as the conflict was terminating; Greyslaer had scarcely regained his feet before he was in the hands of the guard—a prisoner.

CHAPTER XI.

THE DUNGEON TENANT.

"Daughter of grief! thy spirit moves
In every whistling wind that roves
Across my prison gates.
It bids my soul majestic bear,
And with its sister spirit soar
Aloft to Heaven's gates."

J. O. BEAUCHAMP.

MAX GREYSLAER the tenant of a dungeon? and placed there, too, as the murderer of Walter Bradshawe? It is but too true! The fatality is a strange one; yet there are turns in human destiny far more singular.

Had Greyslaer been recognised in the moment that, covered with dust and gore, he rose breathless from the embrace of the dying Valtmeyer, and was seized by the party of Whig soldiery, the charges that were that very night preferred against him by the Tory friends of Bradshawe, in order to conceal their share in the escape of that partisan, had never been listened to; nor could their successful attempt at criminating him have made the head it did. But now, before the Whig officer can call upon a single friend to identify his character, the suspicion of murder has been fixed upon him, and, by the time his name and rank becomes known, his enemies are prepared with evidence which makes that name a still farther proof of his guilt.

The disaffected family to whose care Bradshawe was intrusted, have deposed to the fact of a muffled

stranger having passed into his quarters at midnight. The head of the household avers that it was a man of Greyslaer's height and general appearance. He had heard his step in the entry, unlocked his door, and looked out to see who it might be ; but the stranger, having already reached the staircase and begun ascending, his face was averted from deponent, who could see only the general outline of the stranger's figure. The deponent did not call upon the stranger to stop, nor address him in any way ; for he took it for granted that the stranger had been challenged by the sentinel, and must therefore be provided with a permit or pass to visit the prisoner at that unusual hour. He had himself already retired for the night. The deponent had subsequently heard a tumult, as of men struggling together, in the room above. He leaped from his bed, and, hastening to ascend the stairs, stumbled over the sentinel, who lay stretched at their foot, as if struck down and stunned a moment before. As he stopped a moment to raise the man, he heard a noise, as of a heavy body falling, in the room above. He hurried onward to the room, but its occupant had already disappeared. There was blood upon the floor ; a broken chair, and other signs of desperate conflict. A window that looked into the garden stood open, and there was fresh blood upon the window-sill.

Other members of this deponent's family here supplied the next link in the testimony, by stating that they had heard the window above them thrown open with violence, and the feet of men trampling rapidly over the shed beneath it, as if one were in ferocious pursuit of the other.

As for the sentinel, he seems ready to swear to anything that will get himself out of peril. He cannot account for the stranger making his way

into the house unnoticed by himself, save by the suspicion that his evening draught must have been drugged by somebody. He certainly was not sleeping upon his post, but his perceptions were so dulled that he was not aware of the presence of an intruder until he felt himself suddenly struck from behind and cast nearly senseless upon the ground. But he too, when raised to his feet by the first witness, had followed him to the chamber already described, of whose appearance at the time the former deponent had given a true description.

The testimony of the night patrol—less willingly given—proves the condition in which Greyslaer was found, with dress disordered and bloodstained, as if fresh from some deadly encounter. The marks of blood, too, have been found spotted over the timbers of the pier, while the footprints leading down to the water's edge; the steps dashed here and there in the blood-besprinkled dust; the light soil beaten down and flattened in one place, and scattered in others, as if some heavy body had been drawn across it—all mark the spot as the scene of some terrible struggle, whose catastrophe the black-rolling waves at hand might best reveal.

There was but one circumstance which suggested another agency than that of Greyslaer in the doings of this eventful night, and that was the attack on Mr. Taylor's premises, which had first alarmed the town. But this, again, took place at the opposite side of the city, and could have had no connexion with Bradshawe; for Mr. Taylor's people had seen the ruffians flying off in a contrary direction from that where Bradshawe resided.

But, then, what motive could have hurried on a man of Greyslaer's habits and condition of life to a deed so foul as that of murder?

His habits, his condition? Why! was not the

supposed murderer no other than the wild enthusiast, who, in some besotted hour of passion, had betrothed himself to the abandoned offcast of an Indian profligate? And had not Bradshawe been compelled, by the venomous assaults which had been made upon his own character, to rip up that hideous story, and publish to the world the infamy of Greyslaer's mistress? Was it not, too, through the very instrumentality of this unhappy person that Bradshawe's life had, under colour of law, been previously endangered; that the felon charge of acting as a spy had been got up and enforced against the much-injured royalist? a charge which, even after sentence of death had been pronounced upon the Tory partisan, the stanchest of the opposite faction hesitated to acknowledge were sufficiently sustained to warrant his execution. No, the murderer of Bradshawe could be no other than the betrothed lover of Alida! Such was the testimony and such the arguments which had lost Greyslaer his personal liberty, and which now threatened him with a felon's fate upon the scaffold!

And where, now, is that unhappy girl, whose sorrows have so strangely reacted upon her dearest friend? whose blighted name carries with it a power to blast even the life of her lover?

It is the dead hour of midnight, and she has stolen out from the house of the relative who had given her shelter and privacy, to visit the lonely prisoner in his dungeon. The prisoner starts from his pallet as the door grates on its hinges, and that pale form now stands before him.

Let the first moments of their meeting be sacred from all human record. It were profane to picture the hallowed endearments of two true hearts thus tried, thus trusting each other till the last.

"Oh, Max," murmured Alida, when the first mo-

ments of the meeting were over, "oh, how little did I dream, when I wrote that you should see me no more, that love and duty again might lead me to you ; that God's providence would place you where no woman's doubt could prevent me from—"

"Yes, yes, it is the providence of God, Alida ; you call it rightly," interrupted Max, with bitter feeling. "'Twas Heaven alone which, in its justice, has plunged me in this dreadful—Alida, Alida, know you not that, in the eye of Heaven, I am this moment the thing that men would make me out to be ?"

"Oh, no, no, no !" she shrieked, starting back with features which, for a single instant convulsed with horror, were changed to more than woman's tenderness as again she caught the hands of Max in both of hers, "you are not, you cannot be a—a—no, Greyslaer, no, you cannot be a—murderer. You fought with him, you met him singly—sinfully, in the eye of Heaven, but not with brutal intent of murder—you did—in single combat—'twas in a duel that he fell."

"Hear me, hear me, my loved one ; it was—"

"No, no, I will not hear ; I know 'twas so ; and I—I was the one whose guilty dream of vengeance first quickened such intention into being, and sharpened your sword against his life."

"Alas ! Alida, why torture yourself by recalling the memory of that wild hallucination of your early years ? That shadowy intention of avenging your own wrongs was but the darkly romantic dream of an undisciplined mind, preyed upon and perverted by disease and sorrow ; and many a prayerful hour has since atoned to Heaven for those sinful fancies. But my conscience is loaded far more heavily, and with a burden that none can share ; a burden," he added, smiling with strange meaning on his lip, "that, mayhap, it hardly wishes to shake off."

"You slew him not at vantage; he fell not an unresisting victim to your vengeful passions," gasped Alida.

"The man that I slew yesternight fell in fair and open fight, Alida. There is no stain upon my soldier's sword for aught that happened then." The words had not passed the lips of her lover ere Alida was on her knees. "Nay," cried Max, catching her clasped hands in his, "blend not my name in your prayer of thankfulness to Heaven; 'twill weigh it down and keep it from ascending; for, surely as thou kneelest there, I am in heart a murderer. 'Twas Bradshawe's life at which I aimed; 'twas Bradshawe's death, his *murder*, that I sought, when Valtmeyer crossed my path and fairly met the punishment of his crimes. A mysterious Providence made me the instrument of its justice in exacting retribution from him; and the same Providence now punishes in me the foul intention which placed me there to do its bidding."

If there was something of bitterness in the tone in which Max spoke these words, which gave a double character to what he said, Alida did not notice it as passionately she cried,

"Kneel, then, Greyslaer, kneel here with me; kneel in gratitude to the Power that preserved thee from the perpetration of this wickedness, and so mysteriously foiled the contrivings of thy heart; kneel in thankfulness to the chastening hand that hath so soon sent this painful trial to punish this lapse from virtue—to purge thy heart from its guilty imaginings; kneel in prayer that this cloud which we have brought upon ourselves may in Heaven's own time pass away; or, if not, ITS will be done!"

"I may not, I cannot kneel, Alida," said Max, in gloomy reply to her impetuous appeal. "No! though I own the chastening hand which is even

now stretched out above me, my heart still refuses to cast out the design that brought me hither. I will not, I must not kneel in mockery to Heaven !”

“And thou—thou wouldst still—*murder* him !” shrieked Alida.

“Leave me, distract me not thus,” cried her agonized lover, leaning against the wall as if to steady himself, and covering his face with his hands to shut out the earnest gaze she fixed upon him.

“Speak to me, look at me, Max,” implored Alida, in tones of wild anguish, as she sprang forward and caught his arm. “Thou wouldst—thou wouldst !”

A cold shiver seemed to tremble through the frame of her lover ; but his voice, though low and husky, had an almost unearthly calmness in it, as, dropping his hands and fixing his looks full upon her, he said,

“I would, though hell itself were gaping there to swallow both of us ! Hear me, Alida ; it is the hand of Fate—it is some iron destiny that works within my heart—that knots together and stiffens the damned contrivances it will not forego. Why should I deceive you when I cannot deceive myself ? Why insult Heaven with this vain lip-worship, when no holy thought can inhabit here ?—here,” he repeated, striking his hand upon his bosom, “here, where one horrid craving rages to consume me—the lust of that man’s blood !”

“Oh God ! this is too horrible !” gasped Alida, as, shuddering, she sank upon the prisoner’s pallet and buried her face in her hands.

Max made no movement to raise her, but his was the mournful gaze of the *doom-stricken*, as, standing aloof, his lips moved with some half-uttered words, which could scarcely have reached the ears of Alida.

“Weep on,” he said, “weep on, my love—my

first, my last, my only love. Those bursting tears do well become her, a child of sorrow from her earliest youth. Those tears ! Mine is not the hand to stay them, mine the heart to mingle with them in sympathetic flow ; for I—I can weep no more !”

“ Alida, sweet Alida,” said he, advancing at last toward her ; “ Alida, my best, my loveliest—she hears me not ; she will not listen to me. Oh God ! why shudder you so, and withdraw your hand from my touch ?”

But Alida has sprung to her feet, has dashed the tears from her eyes, and her clear voice thrills in the ears of her lover as thus she speaks him :

“ Hear me, Greyslaer : ’twas I first infused these fell thoughts into your bosom ; ’twas I, in the besotted season of youth, and folly, and girlish fantasy—I that taught you this impious lesson of murderous retribution. It is *my* wrongs, my individual and personal injuries, whose recent aggravation has revived the mad intent, and stamped it with a character of blackness such as before you never dreamed of. Now, by the God whom I first learned to worship in full, heart-yielded reverence, from you, Max Greyslaer—by HIM I swear, that, if you persist in this, I—I myself, woman as I am—will be the first to tread the path of crime, to which you point the way, and forestall you in perdition of your soul. I am free to move where I list, and work my will as best I may ; *your* will is but that of a dungeon prisoner, and Bradshawe’s life, if it depend upon the murderous deed of either, shall expire at my hand before you pass these doors.”

The fire of her first youth flashed in the eyes of Alida as she spoke, and there was a determination seated on her brow, such as even in her haughtiest mood of that arrogant season it had never wore.

But the next moment all this had passed away entirely, and it was only the broken-hearted, the still-loving, the imploring Christian woman that kneeled at the feet of Greyslaer.

"Max—Max—dearest Max," she said, while sobs half suffocated her utterance, "it is Alida, your own, your once fondly-loved Alida, that pleads to you, that kneels here imploring you to rend this wickedness from your breast, and ask Heaven for its pardon. It is she who has no friend, no relative, no resting-place in any heart on earth save that from which you would drive her out to make room for images so dreadful. Surely you did love me once; surely you have pity for my sorrows; you will not, you cannot persist in thus trebling their burden. Ah! now you weep; it is Heaven, not I, dearest Max, that softens your heart toward your own Alida. Blessed be those tears, and—nay, raise me not yet—not till you have knelt beside me." * * *

The cell is narrow, the walls are thick. There is no sound of human voice, no shred of vital air can pass through the vaulted ceiling which shuts in those kneeling lovers! Can, then, the subtile spirit of prayer pierce the flinty rock, mount into the liberal air, and, spreading as it goes, fill the wide ear of Heaven with the appeal of those two lonely human sufferers?

The future may unfold.

CHAPTER XII.

WAYFARERS IN THE FOREST.

"Now stay, thou ghostly traveller—stay ;
Why haste in such mad career ?

Be the guilt of thy bosom as dark as it may,
'Twere better to purge it here."

The Dead Horseman, by MRS. SIGOURNEY.

THE mingled yarn of our story is now becoming so complex, that, to follow out its details with clearness, we must pause to take up a new thread which at this moment becomes interwoven with the rest.

The faithful Balt had been almost the only visitor admitted to the Hawksnest during the last few months that immediately preceded the withdrawal of Miss De Roos from her home. The old forester seemed to have conceived a kind of capricious liking for little Guise, the half-blood child ; and as his visits were really paid to that ill-omened urchin, though his excuse for coming was to ask after the health of Miss Alida, and to inquire if she had any news of the major, Miss De Roos never thought it worth while to deny herself to her humble friend, even while practising the strictest seclusion in regard to her other neighbours.

Balt, in the mean time, was too observing a character not to notice that some secret grief must be preying upon Alida ; and his new-sprung interest in little Guise soon became secondary to the feelings of concern which her fast-fading health awakened in the worthy woodsman.

It chanced one day that Alida, who not infre-

quently took occasion to employ his services in some slight task, which, while remunerating his trouble, would give him occupation while lounging about the premises, pointed out a magnolia which she wished removed to another part of the shrubbery, in the hope that a more favourable situation might revive its drooping condition. Balt readily undertook the task of transplanting it, while Alida looked on to direct him during the operation.

"Now, Miss Alida," said the woodsman, striking his spade into the earth, "I don't know much of the natur of this here little tree, seeing as I never happened on one in any woods I've hunted over; but I rayther mistrust the winds have but little to do with its getting kinder sickly, as it were, in its present situation, I do."

"And why, Balt?"

"Why, you see now, ma'am, if the tree were attacked from the outside, it's the outside would first feel it; the edges of the leaves would first crumple up and turn brownish like, while the middle parts of them might long remain as sleekly green and shiny as the edges be now. There's something, Miss Alida, at the heart, at the root, I may rayther say, of that tree; something that undermines it and withers it from below. And these sort o' ailings, whether in trees or in human beings, are mighty hard to get at, I tell ye." As the woodsman spoke he leaned upon his spade, and looked steadfastly at Miss De Roos, who felt conscious of changing colour beneath the earnest but respectful gaze of her rude though well-meaning friend.

She did not answer, but only motioned him to go on in his digging; and Balt, seeing that he had in some way offended, resumed his work with diligence. But the next moment, forgetful wholly of

the figurative use he had made of his skill in arboriculture, and speaking merely in literal application to the task before him, he exclaimed triumphantly,

"There, you see, now, it's jist as I told ye, Miss Alida; there *has* been varmint busy near the roots of this little tree. Look but where I put my spade, and see how the field-mice have more than half girdled it. The straw and other truck which that book-reading Scotch gardener put around the roots, has coaxed the mice to make their nests there in the winter, and they've lived upon the bark till only two or three fingers' breadths are left."

"I hope there's bark enough left yet to save it," said Alida, now only intent upon preserving the shrub.

"There's life there, Miss Alida—green life in that narrow strip; and, *while there's life, there's hope*; and old Balt, when he once knows whence comes the ailing, is jist the man to stir himself and help it from becoming fatal."

As the woodsman spoke he again ventured an earnest though rapid glance at the face of the young lady; but this time she had turned away her head, and, hastily signifying to Balt that he might deal with the magnolia according to the best of his judgment, she strolled off as if busied for the moment in examining some other plants, and soon afterward withdrew into the house, without again speaking to him.

The worthy fellow, who, on his subsequent visits to little Guise, had never again an opportunity of seeing the protectress of the child alone, was deeply hurt at the idea of this conversation having put Alida upon her guard against listening to more of these hinted suspicions that she needed his sympathy. His natural good sense, however, prevented honest Balt from apologizing for his officious kind-

ness, or showing in any way that he was conscious of having offended. He was, however, from this moment fully convinced that some mysterious sorrow was the latent cause of Miss De Roos's rapidly-fading health, and he determined to leave no proper means untried to get at the real source of her mental suffering.

His first desire was to communicate instantly with Greyslaer ; but he had never been taught to write, and his mother-wit suggested the impropriety of trusting matters so delicate to a third party by employing an amanuensis. In the mean time, the cruelly-slanderous story of Bradshawe reached at last the sphere in which Balt was chiefly conversant. The first mysterious affair about Miss De Roos had, as we have seen, been known almost exclusively to the simpler class of her country neighbours ; but the dark tale, as now put forth by Bradshawe and his Albany friends, originating in the upper classes of society, soon descended to the lowest, and became alike the theme of the parlour and the kitchen, the city drawing-room and the road side alehouse.

A heartless female correspondent of Alida had first disclosed it to that unhappy lady, when alleging it as an excuse for breaking off their farther intercourse ; but it was not till after her departure from the Hawksnest that Balt heard the tale, as told in all its horrid enormity among the coarse spirits of a village bar-room. His first impulse was to shake the life out of the half-tipsy oracle of the place, who gave it as the latest news from Albany ; but, upon some one exclaiming, " Why, man, this is fiddler's news ; that we've all known for a month or more," while others winked and motioned toward Balt, as if the subject should be dropped for the present, he saw that the scandal had gone too far to be thus summarily set

at rest. There was but one other move which suggested itself to him, and that was to take instant counsel with the party chiefly interested in the fair fame of Alida. And Balt, within the hour, had borrowed a horse from a neighbour, and started for Fort Stanwix.

Pressing forward as rapidly as possible, he continued his journey through the night, and thus passing Greyslear on the road, arrived at his quarters just four-and-twenty hours after Max had so hurriedly started for Albany. Balt surmised at once what must be the cause for his abrupt departure, and, as soon as possible, took horse again and retraced his steps ; borrowed a fresh nag from the same farmer who had lent him the first, and pushed forward toward Albany.

His journey was wholly uneventful until he had passed Schenectady and entered upon the vast pine plains which extend between that city and the Hudson. But, fitly to explain what here occurred, we must go back to Bradshawe and his comrade Bettys, and trace their adventures from the place where last we left them in the immediate suburbs of Albany.

To enter a farmer's stable and saddle a couple of his best horses was a matter of little enterprise to two such characters as Bradshawe and his freebooter ally ; and now the pine plains, that reach away some fifteen miles toward Schenectady, had received the adventurous fugitives beneath their dusky colonnades.

The remains of this forest are still visible in a stunted undergrowth, which, barely hiding the sandy soil from view, gives so monotonous and dreary an appearance to the continuous waste. But, at the time of which we write, and even until the steam-craft of the neighbouring Hudson had devoured this,

with a hundred other noble forests in its greedy furnaces, there was a gigantic vegetation upon those plains which now seem so barren.

The scrub oak, which is fast succeeding to the shapely pine, had not made its appearance ; and the pale poplar, whose delicate leaves here and there quivered over the few runnels which traversed the thirsty soil, was almost the only tree that reared its head among those black and endless arcades of towering trunks, supporting one unbroken roof of dusky verdure.

Bold and expert horsemen as they were, Bradshawe and his comrade soon found it impossible to pick their path amid this cavernous gloom in the deep hour of midnight. They were soon conscious of wandering from the highway, which, from the impossibility of seeing the skies through the overarching boughs above it, as well from the absence of all coppice or undergrowth along its sides, was easily lost. They therefore tethered their steeds and "camped down," as it is called in our hunter phrase, upon the dry soil, fragrant with the fallen cones of the pine-trees which it nourished.

So soon as the morning light permitted them to move, they discovered, as they had feared, that they had lost the highway without the hope of recovering it save by devoting more time to the search of a beaten path than it were safe to consume. They knew the points of the compass, however, from the hemlocks which were here and there scattered through the forest, whose topmost branches, our woodsmen say, point always toward the rising sun, and resumed their journey in a direction due west from the city of Albany.

An occasional ravine, however, which, though at long intervals, deeply seamed this monotonous plateau of land, turned them from their course, and thus

delayed their progress; and, with appetites sharpened by their morning ride, they were glad to arrive, about noon, at the earthen hovel of one of that strange, half-gipsy race of beings known by the name of *Yansies*, which, even within the last twelve or fifteen years, still had their brute-like burrows in this lonely wild. Even Bettys, little fastidious as he was, recoiled from the fare which these "Dirt Eaters," as the Indians called them, placed before him. But Bradshawe, while declining their hospitality with a better grace, procured an urchin to guide him to the highway, which he was glad to learn was not far from the hovel.

They emerged, then, once more upon the travelled road within a few miles of Schenectady and at a point where they would soon be compelled to leave it to make the circuit of that town. Their horses were weary and in need of refreshment; and, with their various windings through the forest, they had spent nearly twelve hours in accomplishing a journey which, by a direct route, the time-conquering locomotive now performs in one.

The Yansie boy had left them; for the red hues of the westering sun, streaming upon the sandy road, made their way sufficiently plain before them. Their jaded horses laboured through the loose and arid soil, but still they urged them forward to escape from the forest before the coming twilight. They had ridden thus for some time in perfect silence, when, upon a sudden exclamation from Bettys, his comrade raised his eyes and looked anxiously forward in the long vista before him. The road at this place ran perfectly straight over a dead level for a mile or more. The setting sun poured a flood of light upon the yellow sand, from which a warm mist, that softened every object near, seemed to be called out by its golden beams. Bradshawe shaded

his eyes with his hand to see if he could descry an approaching object, while Bettys, who had already drawn his bridle, motioned impatiently for him to retire among the trees.

"Give me one of your pistols, Joe," cried Bradshawe. "It is but a single mounted traveller ; I can make him out now clearly, and I'm determined to put a question or two to the fellow."

"Well, captain, you know best ; only I thought it might be a pity to slit the poor devil's throat to prevent his carrying news of us to Albany ; and that, you know, we must do if we once come to speech of him."

"How know you but what he may be a king's man, and assist us—or a mail-rider, and give us some rebel news of value ? Draw off, Joe, and leave me to fix him." But Bettys had already trotted aside into the wood, where he managed to keep nearly a parallel route with Bradshawe, who, clapping Bettys' pistol in his bosom, and loosing in its scabbard the sword with which that worthy had provided him in the first hour of his escape, now jogged easily forward to meet the traveller.

As they approached each other more nearly, and Bradshawe got a closer survey of the coming horseman, there seemed something about him which promised that he might not be quite so easily dealt with as the Tory captain had at first anticipated.

His drab hat and leather hunting-shirt indicated only the character of a common hunter of the border or frontiersman of the period. But, though he carried neither rifle on his shoulder nor pistol at his belt, and while the light cutlass or *couteau de chasse* by his side seemed feebly matched with the heavy sabre of the Tory captain, there was a look of compact strength and vigour—a something of military readiness and precision about the man, which stamp-

ed him as one who might often have borne an animated share in the fierce personal struggles of the times ; a man to whom, in short, an attack like that meditated by Bradshawe could bring none of the confusing terrors of novelty.

The stranger, who seemed so occupied with his own thoughts as scarcely to notice Bradshawe in the first instance, now eyed him with a curious and almost wild gaze of earnestness as they approached each other.

Bradshawe, on the other side, surveyed the borderer's features with a stern and immoveable gaze, till his own kindling suddenly with a strange gleam of intelligence, he plucked forth his pistol and presented it within a few feet of the other horseman.

"The rebel Balt, by G—d !" he cried. "Dis-mount, or die on the instant."

The back of the woodsman was toward the sun, and his broad-brimmed hat so shaded his features that his assailant could scarcely scan them to advantage ; but if the suddenness of the assault did in any way change the evenness of his pulse, not a muscle or a nerve betrayed the weakness.

"I know ye, Lawyer Wat Bradshawe," said he, calmly, "but I don't know what caper ye'd be at in trying to scare an old neighbour after this fashion—I don't nowadays."

A grim smile played over the harsh features of Bradshawe, as if even his felon heart could be touched by admiration at finding a foeman as dauntless as himself."

"Real pluck, by heavens !" he ejaculated. "Balt, you're a pretty fellow, and no mistake ; had you trembled the vibration of a hair, I should have shot you dead ; but it's a pity to spoil such a true piece of man's flesh if one can help it. Give me that

fresh gelding of yours, my old cock, and you shall go free."

"Tormented lightning! Give you Deacon Yates's six-year-old gray? That indeed! And who in all thunder, squire, would lend Uncle Balt another horse, if I gin up this critter for the asking?"

"Pshaw, pshaw! Don't think, old trapper, you can come over me with your mock simplicity. I don't want to make a noise here with my firearms, so save me the trouble of blowing you through by dismounting instantly."

As Bradshawe spoke thus, the pistol, which, ready cocked, he had hitherto kept steadily pointed at the breast of his opponent, suddenly went off. The ball grazed the side of the woodsman with a force which, though it did not materially injure him, yet fairly turned him round in the saddle.

The swords of both were out on the instant, while their horses, plunging with affright, simultaneously galloped along the road in the direction which Balt was travelling. With two such riders, however, they were soon made obedient to the rein. Balt, in fact, had his almost instantly in hand, while Bradshawe's tired steed was easily controlled. But their training had never fitted them for such encounters; and the gleaming of weapons so terrified the animals, that it was almost impossible for their riders to close within striking distance of each other.

Balt, who had the advantage of spurs in forcing his horse forward and keeping his front to his opponent, had twice an opportunity of plunging his sword into the back of Bradshawe, as the ploughman's nag of the latter reared and wheeled each time their blades clashed above his head; and it is probable that the wish to make prisoner of Bradshawe, rather than any humane scruple upon the part of the wor-

thy woodsman, alone prevented his using the unchivalrous advantage.

But now Balt, if he would keep his life, must not again forego such vantage. A third horseman gallops out from the wood, and urges forward to the aid of the hard-pressed Bradshawe; and shrewdly does the Tory captain require such aid; for his horse, backed against a bank where the road has been worn down or excavated a foot or more in depth, stands with his hind legs planted in a deep rut, and, unable to wheel or turn, must needs confront the stouter and more active steed of the opposing horseman, whose fierce and rapid blows are with the greatest difficulty parried by his rider. But the third combatant is now within a few yards of the woodsman, who, as he hears the savage cry of this new assailant behind him, wheels so quickly that he passes his sword through the man in the same instant that a pistol-shot from the other takes effect in the body of his charger.

Oh! captain, the d—d rebel has done for me," cried Bettys, tumbling from his horse in the same moment that Balt gained his feet, unhurt by the fall of his own charger, and sprang forward to grasp the bit of Bradshawe's horse; but that doughty champion had already extricated himself from the ground where he fought to such disadvantage. He met the attempt of Balt with one furious thrust, which happily failed in its effect; and, seeing a teamster approaching in the distance, darted into the woods, and was soon lost to the eyes of his dismounted opponent.

"Are you much hurt, Mr. Bettys?" said Balt, not unkindly, as he now recognised the wounded man while approaching him.

"Hurt?" groaned Bettys. "I'm used up com-

pletely. That cursed iron has done for me in this world, Uncle Balt."

"And I fear," said the woodsman, gravely, "you've done for yourself in the other."

"No! by Heaven," said the stout royalist; "there's not a rebel life that I grieve for having shortened. No! as a true man, there's but one deed that sticks in my gizzard to answer for, and that, old man, is a trick I played long before Joe Bettys thought of devoting himself to the king's lawful rights—God save him."

"Pray God to save yourself, rayther, while your hand's in at praying, poor benighted critter," said Balt, in a tone of commiseration, even while an indignant flush reddened his swarthy brow. "Let every man paddle his own canoe his own way is always my say, Mr. Bettys; but you had better lighten yours a little while making a portage from this life to launch upon eternity."

"Yet I meant it not—I meant it not," said the wounded man, unheeding Balt. "Wild Wat swore it was but a catch to serve for a season; that he would make an honest woman of her afterward. But this infernal story—that boy too—oh—"

Balt, with wonderful quickness, seemed instantly to light upon and follow out the train of thought which the broken words of the wounded man thus partially betrayed; and yet his aptitude in seizing them is hardly strange, when we remember that it was the full preoccupation of his thoughts with the affairs of Alida which enabled Bradshawe to take him at disadvantage so shortly before. He saw instantly, or believed he saw, that Bettys' revelation referred to her; but, having as yet only the feeblest clew to her real story, it behooved him to be cautious in betraying the extent of what he knew. He did not attempt, therefore, to question the wounded

man as to what he had first said, but only to lead him forward in his confession.

"Yes, the boy—the poor boy—and his father—" said he, partly echoing the words of Bettys as he bent over him.

"His father? Yes, Dirk de Roos left mischief enough behind him to punish his memory for that wild business. But we were all gay fellows in those days—" some pleasant memories seemed to come over Bettys as he paused for a moment; but he groaned in spirit as he resumed, "and Fenton, too, Squire Fenton, who took the deposition of the squaw—they're gone, both of them—they are both gone now, and I—I too am going—where—where—"

The loss of blood here seemed to weaken Bettys so suddenly that he could say no more. The approaching wagoner had by this time reached the spot: and when Balt had lifted the fainting form of the wounded Tory into his wagon, and bound up his wounds as well as he was able, the teamster willingly consented to carry Bettys to the nearest house on the borders of the forest.

In a few moments afterward, Balt, having caught Bettys' horse, which was cropping the herbage near, threw himself into the saddle, made the best of his way back to Schenectady, got a fresh nag, and hurried with all speed to the Hawksnest.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE TRIAL.

" *Loredano*. Who would have thought that one so widely trusted,

A hero in our wars, one who has borne
Honours unnumbered from the generous state,
Could prove himself a murderer ?

Padoero. We must look
More closely ere we judge—

Be it ours to weigh
Proofs and defence. We may not spill the blood
Of senators precipitately, nor keep
The axe from the guilty, though it strike the noblest."

Mrs. ELLET.

AT this distant day, when we can calmly review all the facts which led to Max Greyslaer's being put upon trial for his life, there would hardly seem to be sufficient evidence against him even to warrant the indictment under which he was tried. It must be recollected, however, that the force of circumstantial evidence is always much enhanced by the state of public opinion at the time it is adduced against a culprit; nor should we, whose minds are wholly unbiased by the fierce political prejudices which clouded the judgment and warped the opinions of men in those excited times, pass upon their actions without making many charitable allowances for the condition of things which prompted those actions.

The clemency which the noble-hearted *Lafayette*—who, being then in charge of the northern department of the army of the United States, had his headquarters at Albany—the clemency which this

right-minded leader and statesman exercised toward Walter Bradshawe, by ameliorating the rigours of his confinement, and even (if tradition may be believed) permitting him to be present at his levees, affords sufficient proof how public opinion may be perverted in favour of a criminal by the subtle arts and indefatigable labours of a zealous faction working in his behalf. If one so keenly alive to everything that was just and honourable as Lafayette, could be blinded as to the real character and deserts of a detected spy like Bradshawe, is it wonderful that the intrigues of the same faction which reprieved his name from present infamy, should for the time awaken the popular clamour against the besotted admirer of a woman whose fair fame was already blasted by its association with that of an Indian paramour?

How far the grand jury which returned the indictment against Greyslaer were influenced by that clamour, and what underhand share the great portion of its members may have had in first raising it, we shall not now say. Those men, with their deeds, whether of good or evil, have all passed away from the earth; it is not our duty to sit in judgment upon them here, nor is it necessary for us to examine into the feelings and principles, whether honest or otherwise, by which those deeds were actuated.

Something is due, however, to the leading Whigs of Albany, who allowed the issue of life and death to be joined under the circumstances which we have detailed. Something to extenuate the cold indifference with which they appear to have permitted the proceedings to be hurried forward, and the life and character of one of their own members, not wholly unknown for his patriotic services, to be thus jeopardised: and, happily, their conduct upon the occasion is so easily explained, that a very few words will

possess the reader of everything we have to say upon the subject.

The horrid crime of assassination was in those days of civil discord but too common, while each party, as is well known, attempted to throw the stigma of encouraging such enormities upon the other. The life of General Schuyler, of Councillor Taylor, and of several other Whig dignitaries of the province of New-York, had been repeatedly attempted ; and when the outrage was charged upon the Tory leaders, their reply was ever that these were only retaliatory measures for similar cruelties practised by the Patriot party ; though the cold-blooded murder of a gallant and regretted British officer by a wild bush-fighter on the northern frontier was the only instance of this depravity that is now on record against the Republicans. Still, as the Whigs had always claimed to be zealous supporters of all the laws which flow from a free constitution, they were galled by this charge of their opponents ; and the desire to wipe off the imputation from themselves, and fix the stigma where alone it should attach, rendered them doubly earnest in seeking to bring an offender of their own party to justice. They were eager to prove to the country that they were warring against *despotism* and not against *law* ; and that, wherever the Whig party were sufficiently in the ascendency to regulate the operation of the laws, they should be enforced with the most impartial rigour against all offenders. In the present instance, these rigid upholders of justice, as old Balt the hunter used afterward to say, "*stood so straight that they rayther slanted backwards.*"

The appearance of Greyslaer upon the eventful morning of his trial was remembered long afterward by more than one of the many females who crowded the courtroom on the occasion ; but when

long years and the intervention of many a stirring theme among the subsequent scenes of the Revolution had made his story nearly forgotten, the antiquated dame who flourished at that day would still describe to her youthful hearers the exact appearance of "young Major Max" as his form emerged from the crowd, which gave way on either side, while he strode forward to take his place in the prisoner's box.

The gray travelling suit in which he came to Albany, and which he now wore, offering no military attraction to dazzle the eye, the first appearance of the prisoner disappointed many a fair gazer, who had fully expected to see the victim of justice decked out with all the insignia of his rank as a major in the Continental army. But his closely-fitting riding-dress revealed the full proportions of his tall and manly figure far better, perhaps, than would the loose habiliments, whose broad skirts and deep flaps give such an air of travestie to the unsoldier-like uniforms of that soldierly day. And the most critical of the giddy lookers-on acknowledged that it would be a pity that the dark brown locks, which floated loosely upon the shoulders of the handsome culprit, should have been cued up and powdered after the fashion which our Revolutionary heroes copied from the military costume of the great Frederic. But, however these trifling traditional details may interest some, we are dwelling perhaps too minutely upon them, when matters of such thrilling moment press so nearly upon our attention.

Before the preliminary forms of the trial were entered upon, it was observed by the officers of the court that the prisoner at the bar seemed wholly unprovided with counsel; and the presiding judge, glancing toward an eminent advocate, seemed about to suggest to Major Greyslaer that his defence had

better be intrusted to a more experienced person than himself. Greyslaer rose, thanked him for his half-uttered courtesy, and signified that he had already resisted the persuasions of the few friends who were present to adopt the course which was so kindly intimated; but that he was determined that no means but his own should be used to extricate him from the painful situation in which he was placed. His story was a plain one; and, when once told, he should throw himself upon God and his country for an honourable acquittal.

The words were few, and the tone in which the prisoner spoke was so low, that nothing but the profound silence of the place, and the clear, silvery utterance of the speaker, permitted them to be audible. Yet they were heard in the remotest corner of that crowded court; and the impression upon the audience was singularly striking, considering the commonplace purport which those few words conveyed.

There is, however, about some men a character of refinement, that carries a charm with it in their slightest actions. It is not that mere absence of all vulgarity, which may be allowed to constitute the negative gentleman, but a positive spiritual influence, which impresses, more or less, even the coarsest natures with which they are brought in contact.

Max Greyslaer was one of the fortunate few who have possessed this rare gift of nature, and its exercise availed him now; for, ere he resumed his seat, every one present felt, as by instinct, that it was impossible for that man to be guilty of the brutal crime of *murder*!

The trial proceeded. The jury were impanelled without delay, for there was no one to challenge them in behalf of the prisoner; and he seemed strangely indifferent as to the preliminary steps of

his trial. The distinguished gentleman who at that time filled the office of attorney-general for the State of New-York, was absent upon official duty in another district. But his place was supplied by one of the ablest members of the Albany bar, who, though he had no professional advocate to oppose him, opened his cause with a degree of cautiousness which proved his respect for the forensic talents of the prisoner at the bar. His exordium, indeed, which was conceived with great address, consisted chiefly of a complimentary tribute to those talents; and he dwelt so happily upon the mental accomplishments of the gentleman against whom a most unpleasant public duty had now arrayed his own feeble powers, that Greyslaer was not only made to appear a sort of intellectual giant, who could cleave his way through any meshes of the law; but the patriotic character, the valuable military services, and all the endearing personal qualities of the prisoner, which might have enlisted public sympathy in his favour, were lost sight of in the bright but icy renown which was thrown around his mental abilities.

In a word, the prisoner was made to appear as a man who needed neither aid, counsel, nor sympathy from any one present; and the jury were adroitly put on their guard against the skilful defence of one so able, that nothing but the excellence of his cause would have induced the speaker, with all the professional experience of a life passed chiefly in the courts of criminal law, to cope with him. He (the counsel for the prosecution) would, in fact, have called for some assistance in his own most difficult task, in order that the majesty of the laws might be asserted by some more eloquent servant of the people than himself, but that some of his most eminent brethren at the bar, upon whom he

chiefly relied, were absent from the city; and, though the evidence against the prisoner was so plain that he who runs may read, still his duty was so very painful that he felt he might not set forth that evidence with the same force and circumspection that might attend his efforts under less anxious circumstances.

Having succeeded thus in effecting a complete revolution as to the different grounds occupied by himself and the unfortunate Max, the wily lawyer entered more boldly into his subject. And if Greyslaer, who as yet had hardly surmised the drift of his discourse, blushed at the compliments which had been paid to his understanding, he now reddened with indignation as the cunning tongue of detraction became busy with his character; but his ire instantly gave way to contempt when the popular pleader came to a part of his speech in which, with an ill-judged reliance upon the sordid prejudices of his hearers, he had the audacity to attempt rousing their political feelings by painting the young soldier as by birth and feeling an *aristocrat*, the son and representative of a courtier colonel, who in his lifetime had always acted with the patrician party in the colony. The allusion, which formed the climax of a well-turned period, brought Greyslaer instantly to his feet; and he stretched out his arm as if about to interrupt the speaker. But his look of proud resentment changed suddenly into one of utter scorn as he glanced around the court. His equanimity at once returned to him; and he resumed his place, uttering only, in a calm voice, the words, "You may go on, sir."

The shrewd lawyer became fully aware of his mistake from the suppressed murmur which pervaded the room before he could resume. He had, by these few last words, undone all that he had

previously effected. He had caused every one present to remember who and what the prisoner was up to the very moment when he stood here upon trial for his life.

The experienced advocate did not, however, attempt to eat his words, or flounder back to the safe ground he had so incautiously left, but hurried on to the next branch of the subject as quickly as possible; and now came the most torturing moment for Greyslaer. The speaker dropped his voice to tones of mystic solemnity; and almost whispering, as if he feared the very walls might echo the hideous tale he had to tell if spoken louder, thrilled the ears of all present with the relation of the monstrous loves of Alida and Isaac Brant, even as the foul lips of Bradshawe had first retailed the scandal.

The cold drops stood upon the brow of Greyslaer; and as the low, impassioned, and most eloquent tones of the speaker crept into his ears, he listened shuddering. Fain would he have shut up his senses against the sounds that were distilled like blistering dew upon them, but his faculty of hearing seemed at once sharpened and fixed with the same involuntary intenseness which rivets the gaze of the spell-bound bird upon its serpent-charmer. And when the speaker again paused, he drew the long breath which the chest of the dreamer will heave when some horrid fiction of the night uncoils itself from his labouring fancy.

The advocate ventured then to return once more to the character of the prisoner himself ere he closed this most unhappy history. He now, though, only spoke of him as the luckless victim of an artful and most abandoned woman. But he had not come there, he said, to deplore the degradation which, amid the unguarded passions of youth, might overtake a mind of virtue's richest and noblest promise.

The public weal, alas ! imposed upon him, and upon the intelligent gentlemen who composed the jury before him, a far sterner duty—a duty which, painful as it was, must still be rigidly, impartially fulfilled. And no matter what accidents of fortune may have surrounded the prisoner—no matter what pleading associations, connected with his youth and his name, might interpose themselves—no matter what sorrowful regrets must mingle with the righteous verdict the evidence would compel them to give in, they were answerable alike to God and their country for that which they should this day record as *the truth*.

The testimony, as we have already detailed it, was then entered into ; and, as the reader is in possession of the evidence, it need not be recapitulated here.

Greyslear seemed to have no questions to put in cross-examination of the witnesses for the prosecution, and this part of the proceedings was soon disposed of. The impression made by the testimony was so strong, that the prosecuting attorney scarcely attempted to enforce it by any comments ; and now the prisoner for the first time opened his lips in his own defence.

“I come not here,” said Greyslear, “to struggle for a life which is valueless ; and, though there are flaws in the evidence just given which the plain story I might tell would, I think, soon make apparent to all who hear me, I am willing to abide by the testimony as it stands. I mean,” said he, with emphasis, “the testimony immediately relating to the transaction which has placed me where I am. *But*, regardless as I may be of the issues of this trial as regards myself, there is another implicated in its results whom that gentleman—I thank him for the kindness, though God knows he little

meant it as such—has given me the opportunity of vindicating before the community where she has been so cruelly maligned. Death for me has no terrors, the scaffold no shame, if the proceedings by which I perish shall providentially, in their progress, make fully clear her innocence.”

The counsel for the prosecution here rose, and suggested that the unfortunate prisoner had better keep to the matter immediately before the court. He saw no necessity for making a double issue in the trial, &c., &c. The spectators, who were already impressed by the few words which Greyslaer had uttered, murmured audibly at the interruption. But Max only noticed the rudeness by a cold bow to the opposite party, as, still addressing the court, he straightway resumed.

“The learned advocate, who has given such signal proofs of his zeal and his ability in this day’s trial, has directed his chief efforts to prove a sufficient motive for the commission of the act with which I am charged. In the attempt to accomplish this, the name of a most unfortunate lady has been dragged before a public court in a manner not less cruel than revolting. I have a right to disprove, if I can, the motive thus alleged to criminate me; and the vindication of that lady’s fame is thus inseparably connected with my own. But, to wipe off the aspersions on her character, I must have time to send for the necessary documents. The court will readily believe that I could never have anticipated the mode in which this prosecution has been conducted, and will not, therefore, think I presume upon its lenity in asking for a suspension of the trial for two days only.”

The court looked doubtingly at the counsel for the state, but seemed not indisposed to grant the privilege which the prisoner asked with such confi-

dence ; but the keen advocate was instantly upon his feet, and, urging that the prisoner had enjoyed every opportunity of choosing such counsel as he pleased, insisted that it was too late to put in so feeble a plea, merely for the purpose of gaining time, in the vain hope of ultimately defeating justice. The calmness of Greyslaer, the apparent indifference to his fate which had hitherto been most remarkable, vanished the instant the bench had announced its decision against him ; and his voice now rung through the crowded chamber in an appeal that stirred the hearts and quickened the pulses of every one around him.

“What !” he said, “is the life of your citizens so valueless that the hollow forms of the law—the law, which was meant to protect the innocent, shall thus minister to their undoing ? Does the veil of justice but conceal a soulless image, as deaf to the appeal of truth as she is painted blind to the influence of favour ? Sir, sir, I warn you how you this day wield the authority with which you sit there invested. You, sir, are but the servant of the people ; and I, though standing here accused of felony, am still one of the people themselves, until a jury of my peers has passed upon my character. An hour since, and irregular, violent, and most unjust as I knew these precipitate proceedings to be—an hour since, and I was willing to abide by their result, whatever fatality to me might attend it. I cared not, recked not for the issue. But I have now a new motive for resisting the doom which it seems predetermined shall be pronounced upon me : a duty to perform to my country, which is far more compulsory than any I might owe to myself. Sir, you cannot, you shall not, you dare not thus sacrifice me. It is the judicial murder of an American citizen against which I protest. I denounce that man as the instru-

ment of a political faction, hostile to this government, and plotting the destruction of one of its officers. I charge you, sir, with aiding and abetting in a conspiracy to take away my life. I call upon you to produce the evidence that Walter Bradshawe is not yet living. I assert that that man and his friends know well that he has not fallen by my hands, and that they, the subtle and traitorous movers of this daring prosecution, have withdrawn him for a season only to effect my ruin. Let the clerk swear the counsel for the prosecution; I demand him to take his place on that stand as *my* first witness in this cause."

The effect of this brief and bold appeal upon every one present was perfectly astounding. Its influence in our time can only be appreciated by remembering how generally the taint of disaffection attached to the upper classes of society in the Province of New-York, and how withering to character was the charge of Toryism, unless the suspicion could be instantly wiped away. It would seem, too—though Greyslaer had only ventured upon this desperate effort to turn the tables upon his persecutors in momentary suspicion that he was unfairly dealt with—it would seem that there was really some foundation for the charge of secret disaffection which he so boldly launched against his wily foe. For the lawyer turned as pale as death at the words wherewith the speech of Max concluded; and he leaned over and whispered to the judge with a degree of agitation which was so evident to every one who looked on, that his altered demeanour had the most unfavourable effect for the cause of the prosecution. What he said was inaudible, but its purport might readily be surmised from the bench announcing, after a brief colloquy, "that the prisoner was in deep error in supposing that the counsel for

the prosecution was animated by any feeling of personal hostility toward him. That learned gentleman had only attempted to perform the painful duty which had devolved on him, to the best of his ability, as the representative of a public officer now absent, who was an immediate servant of the people. As an individual merely, the known benevolence of that gentleman would induce him to wish every indulgence granted to the prisoner; and, even in his present capacity, he had but now interceded with the bench for a suspension of the trial until time might be given for the production of the documents which the accused deemed essential to his defence. The court itself was grieved to think that the prisoner at the bar had forfeited all title to such indulgence by the unbecoming language he had just used in questioning the fairness with which it came to sit upon this trial; but the situation of the prisoner, his former patriotic services, and his general moderation of character, must plead in excusing this casual outbreak of his feelings, if no intentional indignity or disrespect to the court was intended. These documents, however, it is supposed, will be forthcoming as soon as—

“Jist as soon, yere honour—axing yere honour’s pardon—jist as soon as those powdered fellows with long white poles in their hands will make room for a chap to get through this tarnal biling o’ people and come up to yonder table.”

“Make way there, officer, for that red-faced man with a bald head, who is holding up those papers over the heads of the crowd at the door,” cried the good-natured judge to the tipstaff, the moment he discovered the source whence came the unceremonious interruption.

“Stand aside, will ye, manny?” said Balt, now elbowing his way boldly through the crowd; “don’t

ye see it's the judge himself there that wants me? Haven't ye kept me long enough here, bobbing up and down to catch the eye of the major? Make way, I say, feller-citerzens. I'm blowed if I wouldn't as lief run the gauntlet through as many wild Injuns. Lor! how pesky hot it is," concluded the countryman, wiping his brow as he got at last within the railing which surrounded the bar.

"Come, come, my good fellow," said the judge, "I saw you holding up some papers just now at the door; why don't you produce them, and tell us where they came from?"

"Came from? Why, where else but out of the brass beaufet where I placed 'em myself, I should like to know! and where I found this pocketbook of the major's, which I thought it might be well to bring along with me, seeing I had to break the lock, and it might, therefore, be no longer safe where I found it."

"The pocketbook! That contains the very paper I want," cried Greyslaer.

"I doesn't hold all on 'em you'd like to see though, I guess, major," said Balt, handing him a packet, which Max straightway opened before turning to the pocketbook, and ran his eye over the papers:

"Memorandum of a release granted by Henry Fenton to the heirs of, &c.; notes of lands sold by H. F. in township No. 7, range east, &c., &c.;" murmured Max; and then added aloud, "these appear to be merely some private papers of the late Mr. Fenton, with which I have no concern; but here is a document—" said he, opening the pocketbook.

"One moment, one moment, major," cried Balt, anxiously; "I can't read written-hand, so I brought 'em all to ye to pick out from; but I mistrust it must be there if you look carefully, for I made out the

word Max, with a big G after it, when I first took those papers from the clothes of Mr. Fenton."

Greyslaer turned over the papers again with a keener interest, and the next moment read aloud :

"In the matter of Derrick de Roos, junior, and Annatie, the Indian woman; deposition as to the parentage of Guise or Guisbert, their child, born out of wedlock, taken before Henry Fenton, justice of the peace, &c., certified copy, to be deposited with Max Greyslaer, Esquire, in testimony of the claim which the said child might have upon his care and protection, as the near friend and ward of Derrick de Roos, senior, who, while living, fully acknowledged such claim, in expiation of the misdeeds of his son. Witness, HENRY FENTON."

"N. B.—The mother of the child has, with her infant, disappeared from the country since this deposition was taken. She is believed, however, to be still living among the Praying Indians of St. Regis upon the Canada border. H. F."

The deposition, whose substance was given in this endorsement, need not be here recapitulated; and the reader is already in possession of the letter from Bettys to Bradshawe, sufficiently explaining their first abduction of Miss De Roos,* which letter Greyslaer straightway produced from the pocketbook, and read aloud in open court. The strong emotion which the next instant overwhelmed him as he sank back into his seat, prevented Max from adding any comment to this unanswerable testimony, which so instantly wiped every blot from the fair fame of his betrothed.

As for Balt, he only folded his arms, and looked sternly around to see if one doubting look could be found among that still assemblage; but the next

* See chapter xiv., book. ii:

moment, as he rightly interpreted the respectful silence which pervaded the place, he buried his face in his hat, to hide the tears which burst from his eyes and coursed down his rude and furrowed cheeks.

The counsel for the prosecution—who, with an air of courtesy and feeling, at once admitted the authenticity of these documents—was the first that broke the stillness of the scene. And his voice rose so musically soft in a beautiful eulogium upon the much-injured lady, whose story had for the moment concentrated every interest, that his eloquence was worthy of a far better heart than his ; but, gradually changing the drift of his discourse, he brought it back once more to the prisoner, and reminded the jury that the substantial part of the evidence upon which he had been arraigned was as forcible as ever. The motives for Bradshawe's destruction at the hands of the accused was proved even more strongly than before. There was no man present but must feel that the prisoner had been driven to vengeance by temptation such as the human heart could scarcely resist. But, deep as must be our horror at Bradshawe's villany, and painfully as we must sympathize with the betrothed husband of that cruelly-outraged lady, there was still a duty to perform to the law. The circumstances which had been proved might induce the gentlemen of the jury to recommend the prisoner to the executive for some mitigation of a murderer's punishment, but they could not otherwise affect the verdict which it was their stern and sworn duty to render.

"And you don't mean to let the major go, arter all?" said Balt, addressing himself to the lawyer with little show of respect, as the latter concluded his harangue.

"Silence, sir, silence ; take your seat," said a tipstaff, touching Balt on the shoulder.

"And why haven't I as good a right to speak here as that smooth-tongued chap ?"

"You must keep silence, my worthy fellow," said the judge. "I shall be compelled to order an officer to remove you if you interrupt the proceedings by speaking again."

"But I will speak again," said Balt, slapping his hat indignantly upon the table. "I say, you Mister Clark there, take the Bible and qualify me. I'm going into that witnesses' box. You had better find out whether Wat Bradshawe is dead or no afore you hang the major for killing on him."

But the relation which Balt had to give is too important to come in at the close of a chapter, and it may interest the reader sufficiently to have it detailed with somewhat more continuity than it was now disclosed by the worthy woodsman.

CHAPTER XIV.

CONCLUSION.

“And thus it was with her,
The gifted and the lovely—
And yet once more the strength
Of a high soul sustains her; in that hour
She triumphs in her fame, that he may hear
Her name with honour.

Oh let the peace
Of this sweet hour be hers.”

LUCY HOOPEE.

LEAVING Balt to tell the court in his own way the particulars of his first encounter in the forest, we will take up his story from the moment when the broken revelation of the wounded Bettys prompted the woodsman to hurry back to the Hawksnest, where he had deposited the papers of the deceased Mr. Fenton, as mentioned in the twelfth chapter of the second book of this authentic history.

As Balt approached the neighbourhood of the Hawksnest, he found the whole country in alarm. A runner had been despatched from Fort Stanwix, warning the people of that bold and extraordinary inroad of a handful of refugees which took place early in the summer of 1778, when, swelling their ranks by the addition to their number of more than one skulking outlaw and many secret Tories, who had hitherto continued to reside upon the Mohawk, the royalists succeeded in carrying off both booty and prisoners to Canada, disappearing from the valley as suddenly as they came.

Teondetha was the agent who brought the news

of the threatened incursion, but the movements of the refugees were so well planned that they managed to strike only those points where the warning came too late. They were heard of at one settlement, when they had already slaughtered the men, carried off the women and children, and burned another ; and, indeed, so rapid were their operations, that the presence of these destroyers was felt at a dozen different points almost simultaneously. They were first seen in their strength near Fort Hunter ; they desolated the farmhouses between there and "Fonda's Bush," swept the remote settlements upon either side of their northern progress, and finally disappeared at the "Fish-house" on the Sacondaga.

The historian seems to have preserved no trace of their being anywhere resisted, so astounding was the surprise of the country people at this daring invasion ; but tradition mentions one instance at least where their inroad received a fatal check.

Balt, who, as we have said, was hurrying to the Hawksnest to procure the papers which, while clearing the fair fame of Alida, have already given so important a turn to the trial of Greyslaer, instantly claimed the aid of Teondetha to protect the property of his friend in the present exigence ; and, with Christian Lansingh and two or three others, these experienced border warriors threw themselves into the mansion, and prepared to defend it until the storm had passed by.

Nor was the precaution wasted ; for their preparations for defence were hardly completed, the lapse of a single night passed away, when, with the morrow's dawn, a squad of Tory riders was seen galloping across the pastures by the river-side, with no less a person than Walter Bradshawe himself, now well-mounted and completely armed, riding at their head. He had fallen in with these brother partisans

while trying to effect his escape across the frontier, obtained the command of a dozen of the most desperate among them, and readily induced his followers, by the hope of booty, to make an attack upon the Hawksnest. Whether the belief that Alida was still dwelling there induced him to make one more desperate effort to seize her person, or whether he only aimed at striking some daring blow ere he left the country in triumph—a blow which would make his name a name of terror long upon that border—it is now impossible to say. But there, by the cold light of early dawn, Balt soon distinguished him at the head of his gang of desperadoes.

Early as was the hour, Teondetha had already crept out to scout among the neighbouring hills; and Balt, aware of his absence, felt now a degree of concern about his fate which he was angry at himself at feeling for a "Redskin;" though somehow, almost unknowingly, he had learned to love the youth. He had, indeed, no apprehension that the Oneida had been already taken by these more than savage men; but as the morning mist, which rolled up from the river, had most probably hitherto prevented Teondetha from seeing their approach, Balt feared that he might each moment present himself upon the lawn in returning to the house, and catch the eye of Bradshawe's followers while unconscious of the danger that hovered near.

The scene that followed was, however, so quickly over, that the worthy woodsman had but little time for farther reflection.

Bradshawe had evidently expected to obtain possession of the house before any of the family had arisen or warning of his approach was received; and, dividing his band as he neared the premises, a part of his men circled the dwelling and galloped up a lane which would lead them directly across

the lawn toward the front door of the house, while the rest, wheeling off among the meadows, presented themselves at the same time in the rear.

The force of Balt was too small to make a successful resistance against this attack, had the Tories expected any opposition, or had they been determined to carry the house even after discovering that it was defended. His rifles were so few in number that they were barely sufficient to defend one side of the house at a time ; and, though both doors and windows were barricaded, the woodsman and his friends could not long have sustained themselves under a simultaneous assault upon each separate point.

Balt, however, did not long hesitate how to receive the enemy ; his only doubt seemed to be, for the moment, which party would soonest come within reach of his fire.

"Kit Lansingh," he cried, the instant he saw the movement from his look-out place in the gable, "look ye from the front windows, and see if the gate that opens from the lane upon the lawn be closed or no. Quick, as ye love yere life, Kit."

"The gate's shut. They slacken their pace—they draw their bridles—they fear to leap," shouted Kit the next instant in reply. "No—they leap ; ah ! it's only one of them—Bradshawe ; but he has not cleared it ; the gate crashes beneath his horse ; his girths are broken ; and now they all dismount to let their horses step over the broken bars."

"Enough, enough, Kit. Spring now, lads, to the back windows, and each of you cover your man as the riders from the meadows come within shot. But, no ! never mind taking them separately," cried Balt, as his party gained the windows. "Not yet, not yet ; when they double that corner of fence. Now, now, as they wheel, as they double, take them in range. Are you ready ? *Let them have it.*"

A volley from the house as Balt spoke instantly emptied several saddles; and the on-coming troopers, recoiling in confusion at the unexpected attack, turned their backs and gained a safe distance as quickly as possible.

"Now, lads," shouted Balt, "load for another peppering in the front;" and already the active borderers have manned the upper windows on the opposite side of the house.

But the assailants here, startled by the sound of firearms and the rolling smoke which they see issuing from the rear of the house, hang back, and will not obey the behests of their leader, who vainly tries to cheer them on to the attack. In vain does Bradshawe coax, conjure, and threaten. His followers have caught sight of their friends drawing off with diminished numbers toward the end of the house. They see the gleaming rifle-barrels protruding through the windows. They cluster together, and talk eagerly for a moment, unheeding the frantic appeals of their leader; and now, with less hesitation than before, they have leaped the broken barrier of the gate, and are in full retreat down the lane.

"One moment, one moment, boys; it's a long shot, but we'll let them have a good-by as they turn off into the pasture. Ah, I feared it was too far for the best rifle among us," added Balt, as the troopers, apparently untouched by the second volley, still galloped onward.

"God's weather! though, but that chap on the roan horse has got it, uncle," cried Lansingh, the next moment, as he saw a horseman reel in the saddle, while others spurred to his side, and upheld the wounded man. "My rifle against a shot-gun that that chap does not cross the brook."

"To the window in the gable then, boys, if you

would see the Tory fall," exclaimed Balt, as the flying troopers became lost to their view from the front windows. "Tormented lightning! you've lost your rifle, Kit; they are all over the brook."

"No, there's a black horse still fording it," cried Lansingh, eagerly. "It's Bradshawe's horse; I know it from the dangling girths he drags after him. He has gained the opposite bank; his horse flounders in the slippery clay; no, he turns and waves his hand at something. He sees us; he waves it in scorn. Oh! for a rifle that would bring him now."

And, even as Lansingh spoke, the sharp report of a rifle, followed by a sudden howl of pain and defiance, rung out on the still morning air. The trooper again rises in his saddle and shakes his clenched fist at some unseen object in the bushes. The next moment he disappears in a thicket beyond; and now, again, the black horse has emerged once more into the open fields; but he scours along the slope beyond, bare-backed and masterless; the saddle has turned, and left the wounded rider at the mercy of that unseen foe!

Not five minutes could have elapsed before Balt and his comrades had reached the spot where Bradshawe disappeared from their view; but the dying agonies of the wounded man were already over; and, brief as they were, yet horrible must have been the exit of his felon soul. The ground for yards around him was torn and muddled with his gore, as if the death-struggles of a bullock had been enacted there. His nails were clutched deep into the loamy soil, and his mouth was filled with the dust which he had literally bitten in his agony. The yeomen gazed with stupid wonder upon the distorted frame and muscular limbs—so hideously convulsed when the strong life was leaving them—

and one of them stooped to raise and examine the head, as if still doubtful that it was the terrible Bradshawe who now lay so helpless before them. But the crown of locks had been reft from the gory scull, and the face (as is known to be the case with a scalped head) had *slipped down*, so that the features were no longer visible.

The next moment the Oneida emerged from the bushes with a couple of barbarous Indian trophies at his belt; and subsequent examination left not a doubt that both Bradshawe and the other wounded trooper had been despatched by the brave but demi-savage Teondetha.

Such were the essential particulars of Bradshawe's real fate, as now made known by him who beheld his fall.

The court had given an order for the instant release of the prisoner, and the clerk had duly made it out long before the narrative of the worthy woodsman was concluded; but the relation of Balt excited a deep sensation throughout that crowded chamber, and the presiding judge for some moments found it impossible to repress the uproarious enthusiasm with which this full exculpation of the prisoner at the bar was received by the spectators. Those who were nearest to the prisoner—the members of the bar and other gentlemen—the whole jury in a body, rose from their seats and rushed forward to clasp his hand; and it was only Greyslaer himself who could check the excitement of the multitude and prevent them from bearing him off in triumph upon their shoulders. His voice, however, at last stilled the tumult, so that a few words from the bench could be heard. They were addressed, not to the prisoner, but to Balt himself.

“And pray tell me, my worthy fellow,” said the judge, with moistened eyes, “why you did not,

when first called to the stand, testify at once to the impossibility of this Bradshawe having fallen by the hand of our gallant friend, for whose unmerited sufferings not even the triumphant joy of this moment can fully compensate? Why did you not arrest these most painful proceedings the moment it was in your power?"

"And yere honour don't see the caper on't, raaly? You think I might have got Major Max out of this muss a little sooner by speaking up at onçt, eh? Well, I'll tell ye the hull why and wherefore, yere honour;" and the worthy woodsman, laying one brown and brawny hand upon the rail before him, looked round with an air of pardonable conceit at finding such a multitude of well-dressed people hanging upon his words, cleared his throat once or twice, and thus bespoke himself:

"I owned a hound onçt, gentlemen, as slick a dog as ever you see, any on ye; for the like o' that brute was not in old Tryon; and one day, when hunting among the rocky ridges around Konnedie-yu,* or Canada Creek, as some call it, I missed the critter for several hours. I looked for him on the *hathes* above, and I clomb down into the black chasm, where the waters pitch, and leap, and fling about so sarcily, and sprangle into foam agin the walls on airy side. It was foolish, that's a fact, to look for him there; for the eddies are all whirlpools; and if, by chance, he had got into the stream, why, instead of being whirled about and chucked on shore, as I hoped for, the poor critter would have been sucked under, smashed on the rocky bottom, and dragged off like all natur. And so I thought when I got near enough for my eyes to look fairly into those black holes, with a twist of foam around

* Now Trenton Falls.

them, that seemed to screw, as it were, right down through the yaller water of Konnedieyu.

"But now I hears a whimper in the bushes above me. I looks up to the top of the precipice against which I'm leaning, and there, on a ledge of rock about midway, what do I see but the head of the very hound I was in sarch of peering out from the stunted hemlocks that grew in the crevices. To holp him from below was impossible; so I went round and got to the top of the hathe. The dog was now far below me, and it was a putty risky business to let myself down the face of the cliff to the ledge where he was. The critter might get up to me full as easily as I could get down to him; for here and there were little sloping zigzag cleets of rock broad enough for the footing of a dog, but having no bushes near by which a man could steady his body while balancing along the face of the cliff. They leaned over each other, too, with breadth enough for a dog to pass between, but not for a man to stand upright.

"I whistled to the dog: 'Why in all thunder does the old hound not come up when I call?' says I to myself, says I. 'By the everlasting hokey, if he hasn't got one foot in a painter* trap,' said I the next moment, as I caught sight of the leather thong by which some Redskin had fixed the darned thing to the rock. I ups rifle at onçt, and had hand on trigger to cut the string with a bullet. 'Stop, old Balt, what are ye doing?' says I agin afore I let fly. 'The dumb brute, to be sure, will be free if you clip that string at onçt, as you know you can. But the teeth of the trap have cut into his flesh already; will you rûn the chance of its farther mangling him, and making the dog of no valu to any one by letting

* Panther.

him drag that cursed thing after him when he gets away? No! rayther let him hang on there a few moments as he is, till you can go judgmatically to work to free him.' With that I let the suffering critter wait until I had cut down a tree, slanted it from the top of the cliff to the ledge where he lay, got near enough to handle him, uncoiled the leather thong that had got twisted round him, sprung the trap from his bleeding limb, and holped him to some purpose.

"Now, yere honour, think ye that, if I had not waited patiently till all this snarl about Miss Alida had been disentangled afore. Major Max got free, he would not have gone away from this court with something still gripping about his heart, as I may say; something to which the steel teeth of that painter trap, hows'ever closely they might set, were marciful, as I may say? Sarning! sarning he would. But now every one has heard here all that man, woman, and child can say agin her. And here, in open court, with all these book-larnt gentlemen, and yere honour at their head, to sift the business, we've gone clean to the bottom of it, and brought out her good name without a spot upon it."

We will leave the reader to imagine the effect which this homely but not ineloquent speech of the noble-minded woodsman produced upon the court, upon the spectators, and upon him who was most nearly interested in what the speaker said.

The reader must imagine, too, the emotions of Alida when Max and she next met, and Greyslaer made her listen to the details of the trial from the lips of his deliverer; while Balt, pausing ever and anon as he came to some particular which he scarcely knew how to put in proper language for her ears, would at last get over the difficulty by flatly asserting that he "*disremembered* exactly what the bloody

lawyer said jist at this part, but the major could tell her that in by-times."

Those *by-times*, as Balt so quaintly called them, those sweet and secret interchanges of heart with heart, that full and blessed communion of prosperous and happy love, came at last for Max and Alida.

They were wedded in the autumn, at that delicious season of our American climate when a second spring, less fresh, less joyous than that of the opening year, but gentler, softer, and—though the herald of bleak winter—less changeable and more lasting, comes over the land; when the bluebird comes back again to carol from the cedar top, and the rabbit from the furze, the squirrel upon the chestnut bough, prank it away as merrily as when the year was new; when the doe loiters in the forest walk as the warm haze hides her from the hunter's view, and the buck admires his antlers in the glassy lake which the breeze so seldom ripples; when Nature, like her own wild creatures, who conceal themselves in dying, covers her face with a mantle so glorious that we heed not the parting life beneath it. They were wedded, then, among those sober but balmy hours, when love like theirs might best receive its full reward.

Thenceforward the current of their days was as calm as it had hitherto been clouded; and both Max and Alida, in realizing the bounteous mercies which brightened their after lives, as well as in remembering the dark trials they had passed through; the fearful discipline of the character of the one, the brief but bitter punishment of a single lapse from virtue in the other—that Heaven-sent punishment, which but heralded a crowning mercy—both remained henceforth among those who acknowledge

"THERE IS A DIVINITY THAT SHAPES OUR ENDS,
ROUGH HEW THEM HOW WE WILL."

Our story ends here. The fate of the other characters who have been principally associated in its progress is soon told. Isaac Brant, as is related in the biography of his father, perished ultimately by the hand of that only parent, whose life he had several times attempted, and who thus most singularly wrought out the curse which the elder De Roos had pronounced against him in dying. Of Thayendanagea, or Brant himself, we need say nothing farther here, as the full career of that remarkable person is sufficiently commemorated elsewhere. The two Johnsons must likewise at this point be yielded up to the charities of the historians who have recorded their ruthless deeds throughout the Valley of the Mohawk in the subsequent years of the war. The redoubtable Joe Bettys did not close his career quite so soon as might have been expected from the disastrous condition in which we last left him; but, recovering from his wound under the care of the presumed teamster to whom Balt had intrusted him, and who turned out to be a secret partisan of the faction to which Bettys belonged, the worthy Joe made his escape across the frontier. He lived for some years afterward, and, after committing manifold murders and atrocities, he finally finished his career upon the scaffold at the close of the war. The striking incidents of his capture are told elsewhere with sufficient minuteness.* Old Wingear was attainted as a traitor, and died of mortification from the loss of his property. Syl Stickney, the only Tory, we believe, yet to be disposed of, attempted once or twice to desert to his old friends, considering himself bound for the time for which he had en-

* See Stone's *Life of Brant*, vol. ii., p. 212

listed, though both Bradshawe, his leader, and Valtmeyer, who had enlisted him, were dead. When the term expired, however, he did not hesitate to join the Whigs, with whom he fought gallantly till the close of the war, and received a grant of land in the western part of the state for the active services he rendered in Sullivan's famous campaign against the Indian towns. It was doubtless this Sylla and his brother Marius, who, calling each a settlement after themselves, set the example of giving those absurd classic names to our western villages, which have cast such an air of ridicule over that flourishing region of the state of New-York.

It remains only to speak of the affectionate-hearted Balt, whose only foible, if so it may be called, was, that he never could abide a *Redskin*. His nephew, Christian Lansingh, marrying the gentle Tavy Wingear, succeeded to the public-house of her father after the attainder of the hypocritical deacon had been reversed in his favour. And there, by the inn fireside, long after the war was over, old Balt, with pipe in mouth, used to delight to fight his battles over for the benefit of the listening traveller. The evening of his days, however, was spent chiefly at the Hawksnest. Greyslaer, soon after his marriage, had embraced the tender of a mission to one of the southern courts of Europe, with which government honoured him. The health of Alida had been seriously impaired by her mental sufferings; and though loath to relinquish the active part he had hitherto taken in the great struggle of his country, Max was glad to be able to devote himself in a different way to her interests, where Alida would have the benefit of a more genial clime. But in the peaceful years that followed his return, many was the pleasant hunt, many the loitering tour that he and old Balt had together among the romantic hills

and bright trout-streams to the north of his demesnes; and many the token of kindness from Alida to the Spreading Dew, which Max carried with him on these excursions, when the rapid disappearance of game in his own level country induced Teondetha to shift his wigwam to these mountain solitudes.

Of Guisbert or Guise, as the "*Bois-brulé*," or half-blood child was generally called, we have as yet been enabled to gather but few traditions; but we may perhaps make farther attempts to trace his fortunes, and possibly hereafter present the reader with the result of our researches in another tale of The American Border.

THE END.







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